

### Senior Spotlight Davis Dercks

**What are your plans after high school?**  
College

**Favorite teacher?**  
McCarty & Johnson



### Middle School Student of the Month Brock Collien

**Favorite teacher?**  
Mr. Rickert

**Favorite Holiday?**  
Christmas

**Favorite Food?**  
French Fries

**Do you have any pets?**  
A bulldog named Raider



### Teacher of the Month Ms. Lagore

**How many years have you been teaching for?**  
3.5 years

**What are you most looking forward to this school year?**  
I am looking forward to DCON

**What's your favorite part about your job?**  
Getting to interact with students



### Beater of the Month - Bo Bijl

<b>Make and Model?</b> Ford Taurus 2003	<b>Favorite Feature?</b> I can't see at night, my headlights are bad.
<b>How many Miles?</b> 183,000	<b>Favorite Memory?</b> Owen putting a dent in it.

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## Highlights

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### Dates to Know

- January 20: No School - Staff Professional Development
- January 21: Start of 2nd Semester (MS/HS)
- February 11 & 13: P/T Conferences
- February 14: No School
- February 17: No School - Staff Professional Development

### NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The School District of Oakfield does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex (including gender status, change of sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity), pregnancy, creed or religion, genetic information, or disability in its education programs or activities. Federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap and/or any other characteristics prohibited by State or Federal law. If any person believes that the School District of Oakfield or any part of the school organization has failed to follow the law and rules of s.118.13 Wis.Stat. or in some way discriminates against individuals on the basis listed above, send a complaint to the administration office at the following address: Oakfield District Office, 250 E Church St Oakfield, WI 53065.

# Message From Mr. Brown



Happy New Year! We wish you and your family happiness and healthiness!

With the end of the first semester coming fast, our staff and students are fully engaged in successfully completing all requirements. That being said, the administration has one eye in the future to ensure ongoing success. Of all the activities that we feel can best move us forward, our staff is using our recent student data from the Pre-ACT test to make better informed decisions.

Many of our freshmen students haven’t taken a timed standardized test. Therefore, this was a new experience for them. Through using Pre-ACT assessments, our goal is to:

1) Use student results for staff to tailor classroom instruction to help best prepare all our students to reach the college and career readiness level, 2) familiarize students with Pre-ACT/ACT timed assessments, and 3) help students to identify areas where they excelled and areas where they may have struggled, allowing them to set their own goals for growth.

Students in grades 8-11 will be receiving registration materials for the 2025-2026 school year during the last week of January and registering for classes by the middle of February. Please look for more information being sent home and through email late January.

Tuesday February 11 from 6:00 - 7:00pm in the MS/HS Choir Room our High School Counselor, Jennifer Schindel, will be hosting a Middle School Transition Night for all 8th grade parents. On this night we will share the high school philosophy, as well as high school course requirements and curriculum. Parents and students are expected to attend this informational session.

THE ACT

The ACT Test will be administered to all high school Junior students on Tuesday, March 11, 2025. This is a state-mandated test that all Junior students must take. The test will be held at Oakfield Middle and High School. Please get a good night’s rest and eat a healthy breakfast that day. More information will be shared to families of Juniors in the upcoming weeks.

The Pre-ACT Test will be administered to all high school 9th and 10th grade students on Tuesday, April 8, 2025. The test will be held at Oakfield Middle and High School.

There will be 100% virtual learning on Tuesday, March 11 for all students in grades 6-10 and grade 12 due to the ACT test being proctored at the school.

There will be 100% virtual learning on Tuesday, April 8 for all students in grades 6-8, 11 and 12 due to the Pre-ACT test being proctored at school.

Please start making accommodations. Work will be given in advance and all students will be notified of their responsibilities prior to both virtual days for testing.

As always, it remains an honor to serve our district.

Timothy J. Brown  
tbrown@oakfield.k12.wi.us  
(920) 583-3958

# Message from Mrs. Doyle



Happy New Year! With a new year comes new beginnings—let’s make the most of it! Our Oakfield Elementary students are already hard at work and eager to learn!

The One School, One Book Program has been a tremendous success. We truly appreciate the support of our families in reading this year’s book, Gooseberry Park. A special thank you goes out to the Oakfield Parent/Teacher Organization for helping to fund this event. Our goal is to foster more literacy activities at home through family read-aloud sessions. Winter weather is the perfect time to establish a read-aloud routine together.

We have exciting news from the Parent/Teacher Organization following our meeting on Monday, January 13th. They approved using a significant portion of the Guth’s Fundraiser money to support our students and families in the district. Look forward to a Sensory Path in the OES hallways, an additional digital display to showcase events at OES, a school reward at the end of January, a Beach Party in February, Family Fun Night in March, and much more. We couldn’t achieve this without the ongoing support of our families and community.

Please mark your calendars! Spring Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held on Tuesday, February 11 and Thursday, February 13 from 3:30 PM to 7:30 PM. We encourage students to participate in these conversations, as we take pride in having them own their learning. Students feel a great sense of accomplishment when they discuss their successes and set goals for the coming month and the remainder of the school year.

The best way to support your child is to continue modeling respect, responsibility, safety, and kindness. Children are always observing adult behaviors—whether at home, in public, at businesses, or even during sporting events. Please set a positive example so that they learn the right way to treat others.

Thank you for your support, and here’s to a fantastic year ahead!

Mrs. Doyle  
-Oakfield Elementary Principal

# Message from Dr. Sarah Poquette



Dear Oakfield Community,

As I reflect on my first six months in the School District of Oakfield and the broader community, I am filled with gratitude and joy. It’s hard to put into words how deeply being here has impacted me, but I will try.

I grew up in the small, unincorporated town of Brussels in Door County. In many ways, it reminds me of Oakfield. We had a volunteer fire department, one family-owned grocery store, one feed mill, one church, and one school district. Twice a month, a bookmobile stopped by, which was a highlight—not just for the books, but for the sense of connection it brought to our little community.

Growing up in Brussels, it was impossible to go far without encountering a friendly wave or a kind word from a neighbor. Everyone knew everyone and took care of one another. Admittedly, as a teenager, I some-times wished for the anonymity of a larger city, but now, I see what a gift that sense of connection was. Our school, Southern Door, was the heart of the community. Sporting events, concerts, and school activities brought everyone together. Businesses would adjust their hours for school events because they knew the entire town would be there. From what I’ve experienced so far, Oakfield shares the same vibrant spirit.

In these six months, I’ve had the privilege of watching our sports teams and attending musical performances. The halftime milk-chugging contest at basketball games is unlike anything I’ve ever seen! Homecoming festivities radiated Oakfield’s rich history and pride. The collaboration between the school district, the Village, the Lions Club, and the Historical Society showcases how deeply interwoven this community is.

Being part of this fills my heart and drives me to do my very best for our students and community. I don’t take this for granted and am thankful for the opportunity to build connections with students, staff, families, and all of you.

I’ve been asked many times, “How do you like your new role and being in Oakfield?” My answer is always the same: “I love it.” This role gives me a renewed sense of purpose, blending my past with my future. The saying goes, “You can take a girl out of the small town, but you can’t take the small town out of the girl,” and it rings true for me.

My mission is clear: to honor Oakfield’s history and pride while ensuring the best possible learning experiences for our students. It’s a responsibility I hold with deep pride and unwavering commitment.

Thank you for your warm welcome, your support, and your trust in me—a former small-town girl—who is dedicated to helping Oakfield become the best school district in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,  
*Dr. Sarah Poquette*  
District Administrator  
School District of Oakfield

**Upcoming Events and Important Dates**

- Friday, January 17:** End of Semester 1
- Friday, January 17:** Family Bingo Night 5:30-7:30 @ MS/HS Commons
- Monday, January 20:** No School, Teacher Professional Development Day
- Tuesday, January 21:** Start Semester 2

**Other Upcoming Important Dates To Know**

- January 27 - January 31:** 2025-2026 High school course registration materials distributed to students
- February 10 - February 12:** High school registration for 2025-2026 courses
- Tuesday, February 11:** Transition to High School Meeting 6:00 at HS Band Room (Current grade 8 students and families)
- Tuesday, March 11:** Junior ACT. Virtual Learning grades 6-10 and 12
- Tuesday, April 8:** Freshman and Sophomore Pre-ACT Testing. Virtual Learning grades 6-8; 11-12

## Future Oaks: Ages 2 ½ to 4 Please join us on Wednesday, February 19!



*Submitted by Holly Rabe,  
Director of Special Education /  
School Psychologist*

Families of children ages 2 ½ to 4 are invited to attend our annual “Future Oaks Night” on Wednesday, February 19 at Oakfield Elementary School. Younger children (ages 2 ½ to 3 ½) are invited from 4:30 to 5:30 and older children (ages 3 ½ to 4) are invited from 6:00 to 7:00.

Future Oaks Night is a great way for us to meet our future students and to provide parents with information about their child’s development. We will read a story together, make a craft, have a snack, and participate in other fun activities.

If you are a family with a child ages 2 ½ to 4, please watch for more information in the mail. We encourage you to complete the short questionnaire that will give information about whether your child’s development is similar to others of the same age. Please also RSVP to let us know if you can join us on February 19.

Children who attend will receive a Future Oaks t-shirt and book. Families will also receive information about fun activities they can do at home to promote their children’s development. School staff will be available if parents would like to ask questions or share any concerns.

Families of children who will attend 4K next year will have the opportunity to complete registration paperwork while at Future Oaks Night.

If you would like more information, please contact the elementary school office at 920-583-3146.

If you are a parent of a child ages 2 ½ to 4, we warmly invite you and your child to join us on February 19 to celebrate our future Oaks!

Learning from Others at OHS



LEFT: Karen Hartman (waving) came to 3rd hour Philosophy class, then stayed longer with students and worked in the Ag room to finish dreamcatchers. We appreciated her visit to OHS. Photo by Karl McCarty. CENTER: Mr. McCarty brought out his O’Malley T-shirt for the Philosophy class guest. Everett O’Malley spoke about the role of ethics in his profession as a lawyer. RIGHT: Clint Uttendorfer was working hard on his dreamcatcher for Philosophy in early December. Karen Hartman, “The Dreamcatcher Lady”, came to the class to teach her skill of making Native American dreamcatchers. Photo by Karl McCarty.



LEFT: Sam and Owen Stoppeworth talked to our 5th and 6th hour U.S. History Classes. The former OHS graduates discussed their love for history and their business, Brothers Antiques. Their store on Grove Street in Fond du Lac is open weekends, and they shared some of the best items that have come through their inventory. Owen also spoke of the work of the Oakfield Historical Society. Pictured here is Sam with the crew from 6th hour U.S. History Class. RIGHT: The Philosophy class ends the semester discussing the various points of view on ethics. Former OHS graduate Everett O’Malley came to the Oakfield Philosophy class before Christmas. Students got to discuss the ethics of his profession, and they enjoyed their discussion with a lawyer. Photo by Karl McCarty.

FFA

The FFA is in its “calm before the storm” stage as we gear up for a busy Spring! We just wrapped up our Fruit Sale in December - THANK YOU to all those who supported our sale! It makes a significant difference in our ability to provide quality experiences for our members! We also just finished our Holiday Parties and FFA Night

at the Lady Oaks Basketball Game on January 9th! THANK YOU to all who came out to support the game as well as the FFA! We were able to raise \$366 for Day on the Farm through our 50/50 raffle!

Looking ahead we have Leadership Development Events at the end of January and

the start of our Strawberry Sale in February! Watch for ways to order Strawberries in the next edition.

Shout out to our FFA President, Abigail Dorn, for creating our new website! You can check it out at - <https://sites.google.com/oakfield.k12.wi.us/oakfieldffa/home>.

★ ★ ★

High School Students of the Month

★ ★ ★

- Senior

Ben Crile

‘Extremely talented student with a great sense of humor. It’s a joy to have him in class.’
- Junior

Aurora Voss

‘Comes to class prepared, is a hard worker, and is exceptionally kind to others.’
- Sophomore

Owen Engelbert

‘Always puts his best foot forward and brings a positive attitude to class.’
- Freshman

Maddie Adamson

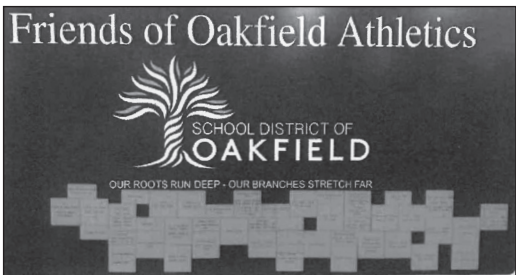
‘Is a natural advocate. She speaks out for herself and others. A true leader.’



Hello Oak Nation,

We are accepting donations for Hudl Cameras which stream our activities to the public. Contact Doug Mock for more information at 920-583-3141. **GO OAKS!!**

**Gym Brick:** Is to purchase a brick for the sign that is located on the wall behind the ticket table when you enter the gym on the Oakfield side.  
3” X 6” with text is \$75.00                      6” X 6” with text is \$100.00



**Scoreboard Advertisement:** Is to purchase a panel that surrounds the scoreboards. It is a financial commitment of \$2500.00 for a five-year placement of your business advertisement. Payment can be an annual payment of \$500.00 or a one-time payment of the full amount.

Oakfield Scoreboard Ad Panel

The School District of Oakfield Is offering business and community members the opportunity to purchase an ad panel that surrounds the scoreboards in the MS/HS Gymnasium.  
It is a financial commitment of **\$2500.00 for a five-year placement** of your message. *Payment can be an annual payment of \$500.00 or a one-time payment of the full amount.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*The School District will need a jpeg file of your business logo, to be displayed on the board.*



Oakfield Gymnasium Bricks

The School District of Oakfield has committed funds to update and modernize the Middle School/ High School. We are bringing back the opportunity for you to purchase a Brick/Plate in the gym. Proceeds from the initial “Brick” sale helped pay for the wan board and score table. There is still a need to replace the scoreboards which are very outdated and will need attention in the future. Purchase a printed “brick” on the new wall. Families, individuals, companies. All are welcome.

Option 1: 3 x 6 with text \$75.00 | Option 2: 6 x 6 with text \$100.00

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Option 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Option 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Text for bricks:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Mail to:  
Oakfield School District • 250 E. Church St., Oakfield, WI 53065

**MOVIE night**  
DROP OFF YOUR KIDS  
SNACKS INCLUDED  
PARENTS NIGHT OUT!  
NHS members will chaperone  
**Oakfield High School Commons**      **February 8th**  
**Movie: Cars**      **Drop off @ 5:30 pm**  
   **Pick Up @ 8:00 pm**

General Mills Box Tops is DIGITAL

Box Tops is a program that the Oakfield Elementary School has participated in for years to earn funds for the library.



**BUY BOX TOPS PRODUCTS**  
Earn for schools with HUNDREDS of products from brands you love.



**SCAN YOUR RECEIPT**  
Use the Box Tops app to submit your receipt within 14 days of purchase.



**EARN CASH FOR SCHOOLS**  
Box Tops products are identified and earnings are credited online.

**Learn More:**  
[boxtops4education.com](https://boxtops4education.com)  
**Earning is Easy!**



19<sup>th</sup> Annual Breakfast with The Oakfield Firefighters

**Sunday, February 23, 2025**  
**Oakfield Community Center/Firehouse**  
**8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

**Prices: 3 years and under    Free**  
**4 - 12 years of age    \$5.00    |    13 years and over    \$10.00**

**We will be serving scrambled eggs, sausage, pancakes, applesauce, doughnuts, orange juice, coffee and milk**  
**(ALL YOU CAN EAT BREAKFAST)**



- \* Coloring contest for the children
- \* The McGruff Crime Dog may be making an appearance
- \* Come out and support your Oakfield Fire Department

**Sponsored by the Oakfield Firemen’s Auxiliary**





**LEFT:** Arthur (Art) and Rose Weiland, probably around 1960. He was a descendant of the Weiland family who had settled north of the Katzenburg in the Town of Ashford in the 1800s. Rose was an immigrant from what became Czechoslovakia out of the Austrian Empire (but spoke German) and settled near LeRoy in Dodge County. An Eilbes by maiden name, it was a common one near St. Andrew’s. Together they had five kids, four whom survived to adulthood and were schooled at St. Kilian Parochial School. They donated their bodies to science, but do have a memorial next to their son Richard’s (1933-1934) headstone in St. Kilian Cemetery. Photo courtesy of Lori Wilhelm. **RIGHT:** This picture of Helen McCarty accompanies her obituary.



# Scrapple from St. Kilian

By Karl McCarty

It must have been May 2017, nearing the end of the school year and Maureen Betz of the Byron Historical Society had a great idea: have students bring in a recipe and their family history. In the process, students could bring in food, have a nice party, and take pride in their roots and the stories they came across. And since then, I annually teach a unit in the junior U.S. History class at Oakfield High School rooted in ancestral history and food.

The project needed a demonstration the students could model, and I needed a recipe anybody could actually cook. Grandma McCarty had the answer and we had a date in her kitchen. She was recorded that night to get her perspective not only on the recipe, but old history of St. Kilian and Ashford.

I had just bought 1.3 pounds of ground pork. She did not recommend Italian Sausage, and said straight up pork sausage was best to use. For the purpose of this recipe, I would avoid flavored pork (but you might like Italian sausage and eventually want to try it). Besides the meat and water, you can count the ingredients on one hand: table salt, black pepper, Lawry’s seasoning salt and flour.

The following recipe is still shared and cooked annually as an example for our family research project for our students.

## The Recipe

- 1 and ¾ cup of ground pork
- 2 cups of water (perhaps more if you are looking for volume with the flour)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 shakes of pepper. “Just shakes.” We used McCormick black pepper.
- ½ teaspoon of Lawry’s Seasoning salt
- 2 cups of flour added to boiling pork and seasoning (Grandma’s recipe said more than two, so If you can get more flour in as you mix, go for it, but it will thicken quick.)
- Loaf pan, and Crisco on the sides and within; just use butter if you don’t have Crisco

## The Actions

Cook the pork in two cups of water for about ten minutes. Not fast, but eventually bring to a boil. It helps to mash up the meat as it reaches a boil. The construction of this final product takes no more than ten minutes. If you are new at this, take your me in bringing it to boil.

Then start adding the salt, seasoning salt and pepper while keeping the water and grease in the pot. In regard to the seasoning salt, Helen said, “we can always taste it” to check. Once the pork has lost its pink, it’s good to start checking how much salt you want in it. Salt will be harder to evenly distribute once you add the flour.

Grandma added, “Bring to a boil, and that’s when you add your flour.” And after adding pepper and salt, really that’s all you do as you wait to add the flour. It thickens quick, and a loaf pan should be greased and ready to go.

Then you let the floured and salted meat sit in a pan for a day or two. On a nice morning when you are ready for something besides cereal, you bring this loaf out of the refrigerator, cut it up and fry it in the pan. You usually don’t need to add butter when browning, as there is grease already in the pork loaf. In addition, the pork has already been parboiled, so you don’t need to worry about a loaf’s raw pork should you like the loaf pieces less browned.

## The History of Scrapple

Helen Weiland McCarty was born to Art & Rose (Eilbes) Weiland in the early 1930s on the south end of Katzenburg Drive in the Town of Ashford. Butchering pigs was a way of life, and almost like a seasonal ritual necessary to surviving rural farm life. The context of this recipe is rooted in the small farms and sustenance that the land could provide a family.



**LEFT:** Scrapple is easy to make. Just pork sausage boiled, filled with flour and dumped into a bread pan. It makes an easy, tasty breakfast the next morning. But the loaf itself isn’t that attractive, looking more like uncooked meatloaf. Photo by Karl McCarty. **RIGHT:** Boil the sausage and add the salt(s) and pepper before you add flour, which thickens quickly. Picture here is the first 10 minutes of the recipe. Photo by Karl McCarty.

Helen said you always took the meat leftover in the sausage process. “The reasons why we made the scrapple was for any sausages that broke...we cleaned out all intestines with salt water. And those we used for sausage, and so if any of them broke, we put them in scrapple.” She added, “You didn’t waste anything.” Thus, the name for the food comes from the scraps of meat being utilized from boiled intestinal casings that broke. Besides boiling sausage in links, some pork was smoked and other was left raw, which “you put it away and froze it,” to cook later. The nice thing with scrapple is the broken pork scraps were already parboiled by the time they were being collected for this leftover recipe.

In terms of the history of the family serving it, back in the 1930s, you would have cooked the loaf pieces in lard. Helen’s mother would have used the lard made from the fat of butchered pigs. “You cooked the fat down... See at that time, you cut the fat off the meat...And they didn’t leave it on.” But they used the fat. “They rendered it.” Rendering, she said, was a slow process that you had to be careful, “cause otherwise it would burn.” Helen could not remember if they added salt to rendering fat.

Today one should use Crisco in the loaf pan so the loaf comes out easy. But one has to remember that back then the lard from butchering the pig was available and that’s what they used for greasing the pan.

When we were done getting the pan loafed, I asked “Was denkst du?” and asked her what I said in German. She knew. “What do I think?” she said to me. Then she answered: “I think this is good.” She’s right, and so is the price, as the food is incredibly cheap for the volume it produces. In addition, most of the ingredients are already in your kitchen.



# Bill Behm ‘races’ through U.S. History classes



LEFT: Bill Behm took the time to share the history of the Oakfield racetrack. He spoke to all three sections of the U.S. History class. He also spoke to seniors in homeroom. Here Bill explains the success of Miles Melius to seniors Colten West, Logan Steinke and Cyle Lueck. Photo by Karl McCarty. RIGHT: This is an image of race car driver John Kuester making adjustments to his car. John drove Hudson's, and Bill explained how around 1950 it was common to fix and tweak cars by flipping them over as seen here. Photo courtesy of Bill Behm.



AT LEFT: This is a photo of the old George Beirne's farm off of County D & B. Bill Behm said, "George's son Ivan was the driving force behind opening the track. He and his friends graded the track, built plank bleachers on the hill, set up a refreshment stand, built a couple of outhouses, and set a row of railroad ties between the road and the pits." The railroad ties was added after the opening of the track, and so too was more seating. Bill discussed how the railroad ties were added. "I imagine this was to keep out of control race cars off the road and people on the road from viewing the races without paying." In addition, "The dirt track was very dusty, so Ivan hired one of the racers, Al Feller from Mayville, to haul loads of lime to be spread on the track. This and plenty of water helped somewhat, but the track was always very dusty." Also, "In this early picture of the track, you can see the poles carrying the electricity to the track for the loudspeakers. You can also see a few bleachers and the two outhouses on the hill." Photo courtesy of Bill Behm.



ABOVE: Bill Behm took the time to preserve photos from the Oakfield race track and shared them with the OHS U.S. History class. He labeled this image "Mrs. Elmer Nitschke and her daughter Rushara taking a break from taking tickets." Courtesy of Bill Behm. AT LEFT: Bill Behm presented on the Oakfield race track to Mr. McCarty's U.S. History classes. Bill explained this image: "This picture shows the dedication of the racetrack. The Oakfield American Legion Honor Guard is shown with the flags. Notice the trailer that is being used as the announcers stand, later a permanent stand was built. You can see the race cars in the pits between the track and the road." Furthermore, an ambulance is parked in the infield right of the announcer's stand. Photo courtesy of Bill Behm.

## SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OAKFIELD CENSUS

Is your young family new to the district in the last five years? Did you recently have a baby?

If you answered "YES" to either of these questions, we'd love to include your child in our school district census directory to ensure we have accurate information. Maintaining an up-to-date census is a state-mandated activity, and we strive to include all new families in the district. Please take a moment to complete this form so we can keep our records current.

For any questions, feel free to email us at [info@oakfield.k12.wi.us](mailto:info@oakfield.k12.wi.us) or call the District Office at (920) 583-4117. Thank you for helping us stay connected!

To ensure your child doesn't miss out on these opportunities, join our Census by choosing one of the following options:

- Visit our website at [oakfield.k12.wi.us](http://oakfield.k12.wi.us), select Menu, Families, Census Form in the drop down.
- OR
- Complete and return this form to:  
Census  
Oakfield School District  
250 E Church St  
Oakfield, WI 53065

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

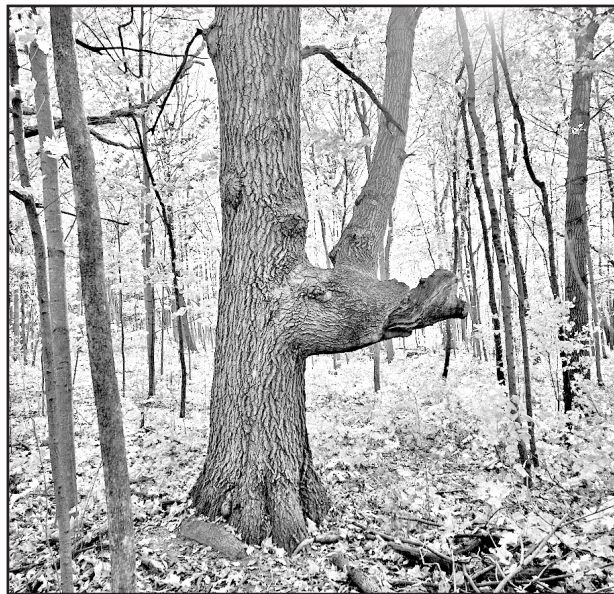
Father's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City and Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_



LEFT: This white oak's canopy came off in the storm years back, and eventually the tree was cut down. Derek Komp counted the rings on the stump at 145, taking back that Ledge tree to the 1870s. The red oak that was likely bent by Native Americans and the focus of this article is much older than this oak photographed here. Photo by Karl McCarty. CENTER: This oak in Oakfield Township lies above the Ledge, and matches the qualities of a trail tree, likely made by shaping the branch in a southwesterly direction. Photo by Karl McCarty. RIGHT: This is a side view of the bent branch coming out. It was chainsawed decades ago, but luckily the base of the bent branch was not altered, preserving enough evidence the red oak could be a marker tree shaped by Native Americans. Photo by Karl McCarty.

## What Was Lost: Another Marker Tree on the Ledge

By Karl McCarty

There is another solid example of a trail marker tree on top of the Ledge in the Town of Oakfield. The following is the rationale on why Native Americans likely bent this red oak. This article is a continuation of a series dedicated to documenting the Native American significance of the area where Dodge, Fond du Lac and Washington counties converge.

- **Species.** First, this tree is a red oak, so it is the type that is durable and old. Unlike willows or boxelders, this tree is one that dates much farther back into the 1800s. In the vicinity where it is standing, it is one of a few old trees, including a 175 year old Ash tree that has fallen. Another large white oak is dying in the area, and one of the age-comparable survivors is a healthy maple standing nearby. At least the forest surrounding the red oak trail tree validates that it grew up when the forest was old growth, and it still has those elements where deer repeatedly browse the budding maples to keep them carpeting the forest floor.
- **Strange Side Branch.** "What always just caught my attention was how thick this side branch was," said owner Derek Komp. He said he never saw a tree where its side branch was relatively comparable to the size of the trunk. This suggests an unnatural pulling of a branch down, despite being surrounded in a forest with taller trees when it was young. Understand that such redirected growth of the side branch takes a considerable amount of energy from the trunk, which might further add to its age.
- **Circumference Matches Age.** It is always important to measure the potential marker trees at about four and a half feet high to calculate age. From that height, the tree is eight and a half feet in circumference and takes its early growth to at least the mid 1800s, and perhaps early 1800s.
- **Topography Validates Age.** In tandem with the red oak's circum-

ference is other evidence in the forest. Derek also noted, "There's only six inches of soil before you get into the rock. When you look at the growth rings of the trees over here, they grow very slow." In addition, the rings on a lot of the white oak he has looked at are very close. For many of the trees on the Oakfield Ledge, their age estimates might be under counted given the stress required to survive through rock. This isn't like the tree was growing in ideal soil to propel faster growth. As an example, Derek pointed out a white oak that was damaged a few years after a major storm in 2018. This white oak was only 24 inches in diameter, but he counted 145 years taking the tree back into the 1870s. Likewise, the red oak trail tree of this article is five inches wider in diameter. The white oak is only 6 feet 3 inches in circumference and is 145; while the red oak trail tree is at least 8 feet 6 inches in circumference. This is more evidence the red oak trail tree could be at least 200 years old and shaped prior to statehood.

- **It's a Ledge Bend.** Recall that other Native American shaped trees had their leader bent. In the Horicon Marsh, and Oakfield Ledge it may have been more common to bend the branch of the tree down—not the leader. This red oak has similar tendencies of the tree bent nearby as well as the tree featured in Robert Gard and Edgar Mueller's Wild Goose Marsh: Horicon Stopover (1972) which was at the lower end of the Marsh. The Messner tree previously reported also is a branch bend rather than a leader bend.
- **Previous Ownership retained Integrity of Tree.** One of the criticisms that need to be addressed when arguing a trail tree is to verify if the previous owners would have taken care of the tree or at least ignored it. There is a slight change to the tree given the previous landowner cut the redirected branch sometime after the mid 1970s. But this change does

not impact whether the tree was bent well before it. Clearly enough of the bent branch exists given what remains is comparable to the trunk size. Along those lines, there is a history of caretakers as property owners, suggesting why it survived. It's important for those on the land to preserve what was in the woods, and in this case the land has been relatively preserved since the 1960s, if not beforehand. Also, the land has so much ledge rock, the area where the tree stands was not tillable in the early days when agriculture expanded in the area.

- **Potential Rock Formation.** The previous owner said he never pushed rocks in the woods more than right off the trail. That former owner argued those rocks presently laying by the red oak trail tree were untouched. Derek also noted that there is a lifted stone "with a

north/south orientation" with one of the rocks. The present situation of those rocks give rise to a theory that it's a cairn. "It's almost a true north/south," Derek said of the rocks which seem to be pointing. There is the potential that the rock pile is actually a double marker with the tree.

Overall, the red oak on top of the Ledge suggests a continued path of directional marker trees on the north east side of the Horicon Marsh. This is added by the plausibility that the tree was preserved because the land close to the Ledge's dropoff was not tillable in the 1800s and early 1900s. The tree also correlates with another trail tree whose shaped branch extends in a southwesterly direction on top of the Ledge in the same township. We are lucky this tree can be documented for posterity to make the case of old paths for Native Americans.



This cool group from the U.S. History class were lucky enough to see the trail tree in October. From left to right are Madeline Meredith, Mia Goldapske, Jaelyn Wallendal, Kate Haase and Aurora Voss. Right of the tree are Sheldyn Boettcher, J.J. Laning, Noah Fisher, Brayden Joas and Fleur Munster. It's important to take pictures of these trees next to people to show relative size. Thanks also to the Komp family for letting us learn about the landscape! Photo by Karl McCarty.



# Why Does Oakfield Need an Operational Referendum?

Sarah Poquette

Have you felt the impact of inflation on everyday expenses? Rising costs at the grocery store, gas station, and utility bills have stretched many household budgets, and you're not alone in noticing the difference. Out of curiosity, I compared prices from five years ago to today. Between 2020 and 2025, inflation averaged over 4% per year. Here's a quick look at some of the changes found on the CBS News website:

Goods or Services	Average Cost in 2020	Average Cost in 2025
Gallon of Gas	\$2.57 per gallon	\$3.18 per gallon
Utility Gas	\$1.06 per gallon	\$1.49 per gallon
Electricity Prices	\$0.13 per kWh	\$0.18 per kWh
Bread	\$1.35 per loaf	\$1.92 per loaf
Milk	\$2.96 per gallon	\$3.65 per gallon
Eggs	\$1.46 per dozen	\$3.65 per dozen
Chicken	\$1.41 per pound	\$2.08 per pound

These examples show how inflation has impacted households, and they also highlight the financial challenges faced by our district. Rising costs for utilities, transportation, and supplies have directly increased our expenses, which is why it's crucial to address our district's funding needs.

## History of School Funding

State funding for public schools in Wisconsin is distributed through a combination of general state aid, categorical aid, and property tax revenue, all governed by a state-imposed revenue limit that started in 1993. In 2009 inflation was removed from the revenue limit equation. Which meant the funding stopped keeping pace with inflation creating funding gaps for school districts. To address these gaps, districts were forced to rely on voter approval to exceed the revenue limit through school referendums.

Oakfield has used multiple operational referendums to help cover the budget deficit since 2006. The April referendum is needed to renew the current referendum ending in June. This funding will help cover the gap created by the lack of state funding.

At the January 7 board meeting, the Board approved pursuing a non-recurring operational referendum question, which will appear on the ballot on Tuesday, April 1, 2025. If approved by voters, the district will be authorized to exceed its state-imposed revenue limit by \$1.1 million per year from the 2025-26 school year through the 2028-29 school year, for a total of \$4.4 million over four years.

Here is what the referendum question will look like on the April ballot.

Shall the School District of Oakfield be authorized to exceed state revenue limits by \$1,100,000 for the 2025-26, 2026-27, 2027-28, and 2028-29 school years all on a non-recurring basis to support School District educational offerings, staff salaries, and daily operating expenses?

## What is an Operational Referendum?

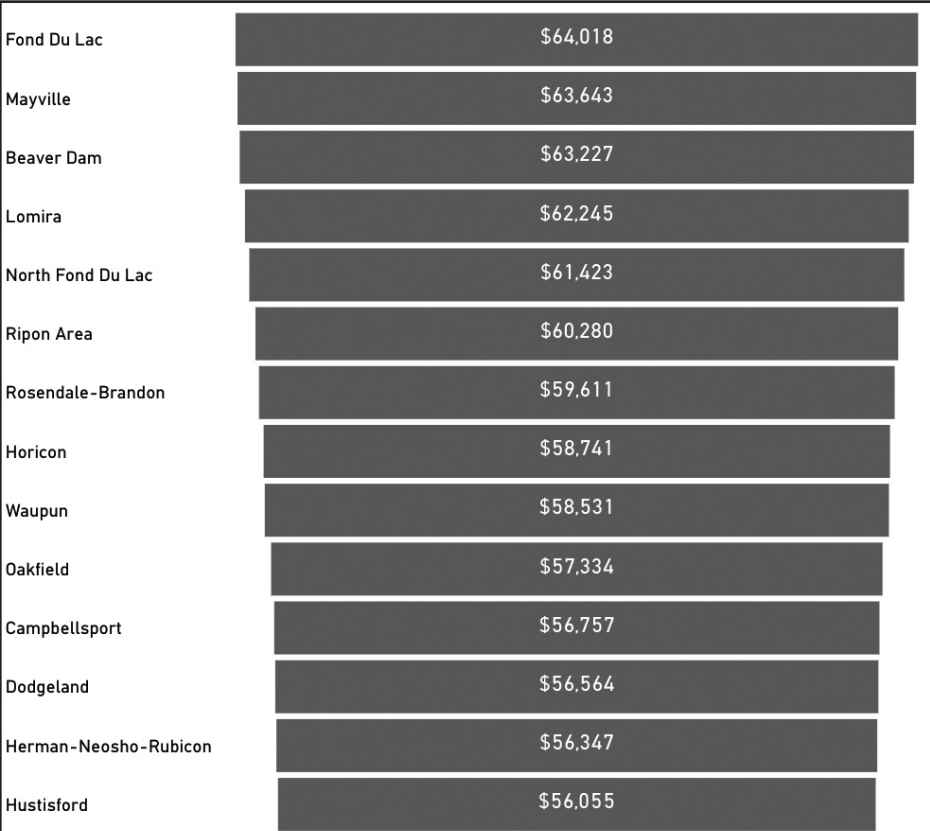
An operational referendum allows school districts to exceed the limit on revenue imposed by the state by asking communities to help fund ongoing costs to operate the day-to-day functions of the school district, such as instruction and materials, technology, safety, support for students, staff salaries and benefits, and supplies.

## How the Funds Will Be Used

If passed, the referendum will allow the district to:

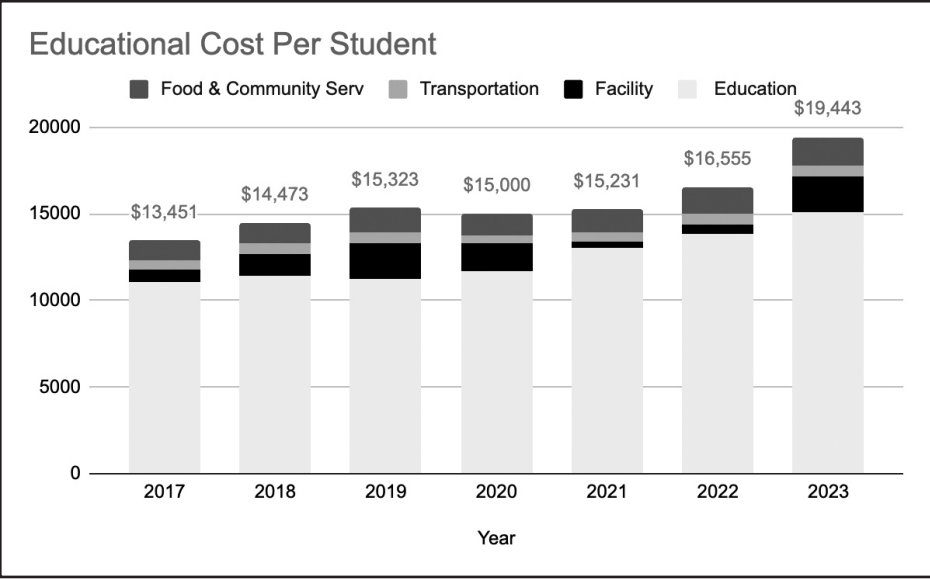
- Protect High-Quality Educational Offerings:** Our students and families have greatly benefited from the advanced course options available at our high school. Currently, we offer 8 Advanced Placement (AP) and Cooperative Academic Partnership Program (CAPP) classes each year, with plans to add 2 more CAPP classes in the 2025-2026 school year. These opportunities give our students a competitive edge, allowing them to enter college with earned credits, saving time and money while enhancing their academic readiness.
- Retain and Attract Top Talent:** Investing in the recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers and staff is essential to supporting student success. Currently, Oakfield ranks in the lower quartile for staff pay compared to nearby districts. To remain competitive and keep our exceptional staff, we must offer compensation comparable to neighboring districts. Our talented team is a cornerstone of our community, and we must ensure they continue to thrive in Oakfield.

Average Teacher Salary (2023)  
Reported by the Wisconsin Department of Instruction



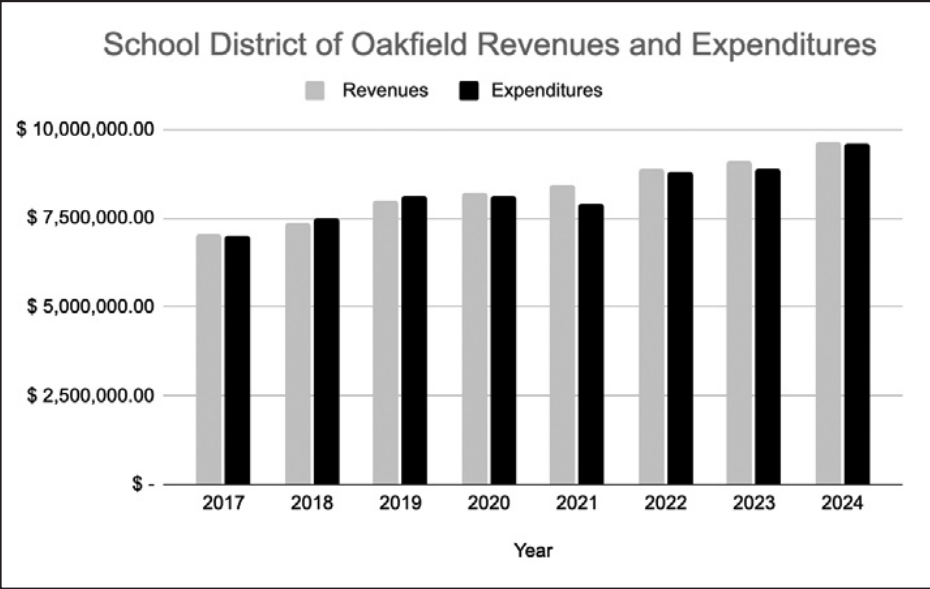
Source: Department of Public Instruction Report Generated by: spo

- Support Current Operating Expenses:** To sustain our programs and maintain a balanced budget, we must address the rising costs of our current operations, which have been impacted by inflation. Unlike households, schools cannot simply generate additional income or eliminate essential services. The following graph illustrates the various costs associated with educating one student in Oakfield. These costs continually increase each year and exceed the \$11,235 per pupil provided by state funding.



## Financial Planning and Fiscal Responsibility

Before deciding to move forward with this referendum, district administration and the Board completed financial forecasting to anticipate upcoming costs and ensure the district avoids a deficit budget. Based on this analysis, it was determined to operate without a deficit, the district needs the ability to levy up to \$1.1 million annually for the next four years. The following graph highlights our revenues and expenditures from 2017-2024



As we move forward, we are carefully examining all purchases and services to ensure fiscal responsibility. We recognize the need to be good stewards of our resources but we also have an obligation to preserve the integrity and success of our current programs and staff.

Continued on next page.

What About the \$16 Million Capital Referendum of 2022?

Oakfield has consistently worked to build a strong educational system, and maintaining the progress we’ve achieved is vital. Ensuring our school buildings remain vibrant, functional spaces for students and staff is a key priority.

In 2022, our community united to pass a \$16 million capital referendum. This funding enabled our schools to address critical needs, including:

- ADA compliance and monitored and secured entrances to enhance accessibility and safety.
- Upgrades to major building systems, such as plumbing, electrical, LED lighting, HVAC, and roof replacements.
- Modernization of classrooms and common areas in our Middle and High Schools, offering students access to diverse learning experiences.

Key improvements included:

- Modernized shop/tech classroom for welding, woodworking, and auto mechanics.

- Dedicated music classrooms, eliminating the need for students to walk between buildings for classes.
- A new addition for middle school students, featuring flexible seating and hall-way spaces designed for collaborative teacher-student small group work.
- Classrooms specifically designed to support the needs and learning of our special education students.
- Expanded and redesigned health rooms.

Additionally, extensive upgrades were made to bathrooms, HVAC, lighting, and plumbing, ensuring our facilities remain efficient and conducive to learning.

This investment reflects our commitment to providing a safe, accessible, and innovative environment for all students.

This is a pivotal time for our district, and we deeply appreciate your continued support and involvement as we work to secure the resources necessary to make Oakfield the best small district in Wisconsin. I am committed to fostering a thriving community and ensuring our students receive the highest quality education possible.

We look forward to engaging with you in the coming months. Updates and information will be shared on our district webpage, Facebook, and through informational meetings. Thank you for being part of this important journey.

# Oakfield FFA WE PUT THE AG IN Swag.

FFA is a youth organization that helps students display premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agriculture education.



Use this QR code to check out our website for more information on the organization!

**How to get involved:** Enrolling in an agriculture class automatically makes a student an FFA member. Members can attend monthly FFA meetings, participate in public speaking events, volunteer hours, travel for conferences, and more!

## Upcoming Events

• Strawberry Sale

Students have the opportunity to sell strawberries to family, friends, and more! Order forms will be available in Mrs. Daane’s room. Selling dates are February 3rd–21st.

• Greenhouse Sale

We will be having our annual greenhouse sale May 2nd, 3 P.M.–5 P.M, and May 3rd, 8 A.M.–12 P.M. Flower pots, planters, and vegetables would make perfect gifts for Mother’s Day!

• Toy Show

On April 6th from 9 A.M–2 P.M FFA alumni will be hosting the toy show/craft fair. Pay at the doors and enjoy a morning of enjoyment.

• Fond Du Lac County Fair

Come and support our hard working members as they exhibit their projects at the Fond du Lac county fair, July 16–20th.

Resolutions and new habits can be hard, but remember...

## **START small**

**Choose ONE habit to start with,**

Too many is Too much! You'll find yourself overwhelmed and exhausted.

**Focus on TODAY,**

Focusing too much on the outcome becomes stressful and daunting.

**CELEBRATE the small achievements!**

Small changes build over time so  
reward your success as you go.

**Every day is a NEW day,**

Don't put yourself down for making mistake or tripping up.  
Start again tomorrow.

**If you think of it DO IT,**

If it takes less than 2 minutes, you have time.  
Don't think just do.

**TRACK your progress,**

Being able to see your progress will keep you accountable and  
be proud of yourself as you grow.

**Take it EASY,**

Nothing is perfect, tweak things as you need to and  
be KIND to yourself.

Next thing you know,

**You've achieved something BIG!**



Resident/Parent/School Communications

This form is available for you to offer suggestions or make comments about any facet of the School District of Oakfield. If you would like someone from the District to respond to what you have written, please furnish us with the information requested below.

CHECK ONE:

☐ I hope my input is helpful but it is not necessary for someone to contact me with a response.

☐ Please respond to my comments/suggestions:

Name:

Address:

Email:

Phone:


COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS:

Please send to:  
Sarah Poquette  
District Administrator  
School District of Oakfield

School Board Meeting Schedule  
2024-2025

Monday, January 20, 2025	
Regular Meeting	5:30 p.m. MS/HS IMC
Monday, February 10, 2025	
Committee of the Whole Meeting	5:30 p.m. MS/HS IMC
Monday, February 24, 2025	
Regular Meeting	5:30 p.m. MS/HS IMC
Monday, March 10, 2025	
Regular Meeting	5:30 p.m. MS/HS IMC
Monday, April 14, 2025	
Committee of the Whole Meeting	5:30 p.m. MS/HS IMC
Monday, April 28, 2025	
Regular Meeting	5:30 p.m. MS/HS IMC

2024-25 District of Oakfield Academic Calendar



**Oakfield Elementary**  
920-583-3146

Normal Day Schedule:  
8:00 a.m.-3:15 p.m.

**Oakfield Middle/High School**  
920-583-3141

Normal Day Schedule:  
8:00 a.m.-3:25 p.m.

District Administrator  
920-583-4117

**Mr. Timothy Brown**  
MS/HS Principal  
920-583-3958

**Mrs. Becky Doyle**  
Elementary School Principal  
920-583-3146

**Mrs. Holly Rabe**  
School Psychologist/  
Director of Special Education  
920-583-3146

**Mr. Doug Mock**  
MS/HS Activities Director/Phy Ed  
920-583-4599

Johnson Bus Service  
920-583-3335

**Oakfield Child Care/Learning Center**  
Director-Bre Reis  
920-583-2648

Aug/Sept 2024

25	26	27	28	29	30	31
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	20
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

20

October 2024

		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	PT 22	23	PT 24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

21

November 2024

					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22**	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

18

December 2024

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

15

January 2025

			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17*	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

21

February 2025

						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	PT 11	12	PT 13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

18

March 2025

						1
2	3	4**	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

16

April 2025

		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

20

May 2025

				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

21

June 2025

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

4

School Day

No School

Teacher Professional Development-no school

School Open House

Snow Make-Up Days

To be determined

August 26-29 2024

August 28, 2024

September 2, 2024

September 3, 2024

October 4, 2024

October 22 & 24, 2024

October 25, 2024

November 27, 2024

November 28 & 29, 2024

December 23, 2024-January 1, 2025

January 20, 2025

February 11 & 13, 2025

February 14, 2025

February 17, 2025

March 24-March 28, 2025

April 18, 2025

April 21, 2025

May 26, 2025

June 5, 2025

June 6, 2025

No School--Teacher Professional Development

District Open House 4pm-6pm

No School-Labor Day

First Day of School

No School--Teacher Professional Development

Parent Teacher Conferences 3:30-7:30 pm

No School

No School--Teacher Professional Development

Thanksgiving Break--No School

Winter Break--No School

No School--Teacher Professional Development

Parent Teacher Conferences 3:30-7:30 pm

No School

No School--Teacher Professional Development

Spring Break--No School

Good Friday--No School

No School--Teacher Professional Development

Memorial Day--No School

Last Day of School-early release (2 hours early)

Teacher Workday-Graduation

Board Approved 2.12.24