



WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS CLIPS FOR OCTOBER 2024

OUR NEW 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR IS OFF TO A GREAT START!!! – THANK YOU TO THE GREAT STAFF HERE AT WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL, TO OUR STUDENTS, AND TO THE SUPPORT OF THEIR PARENTS/GUARDIANS.

PARKING DURING AND AFTER SCHOOL... Westminster Presbyterian Church has always been generous in allowing us to use their parking lot. In the mornings when dropping students off, please try and use this as a drive-through drop off area. For after school pickup you can also utilize the Community Center parking lot, and the visitor parking available on the north end of the building. Westminster church is asking parents and staff of West Middle School to remember there is absolutely **NO PARKING** in front of or next to the church building. These are designated spaces for church use only and are considered **“No Parking”** zones that we cannot use. The church has been a great neighbor, please respect the no parking zones both during the school day and for evening sports events and conference nights. Remember, there is no student drop off or pickup in the front circle (this is for buses), or in the back of the building. Thank you for your consideration.

School issued Chromebooks are to be used for academic purposes only. Laptop activity and websites, you visit are monitored daily, whether you are at school or at home. The District IT department can search website history whether you are logged in at home or at school. Please remember to be digitally responsible when using the school laptop. It is a privilege and there are consequences for misusing school technology and/or the laptop will be confiscated. Thank you, Administration



Daily Announcements are posted on the West Middle School website.

ACTIVITIES WEBSITE...The activities website is available and may be helpful in keeping you immediately informed of upcoming activities. If an event gets cancelled or postponed, it will also be on the activities calendar. The site is www.rcas.org Our WMS website is available by going to www.rcas.org West Middle School MS Activity on the left hand side of the screen.

LIBRARY NEWS – BOOK FAIR 2024

*The Book Fair is coming. The Book Fair is coming. The Book Fair runs from October 28-November 8. **There will be an opportunity for three \$10 Book Fair certificates to win by identifying the 10 secretly disguised staff members in the library.** The winners will be announced on November 6th. You may begin shopping with the online Scholastic Book Fair on November 4th. The online book fair has a larger variety of books to select from. The link to the online book fair will be on the library homepage and Facebook page when it becomes active.*

October

Rapid City Area School and Rapid City Police Department officials are reminding drivers to stop for school buses when approaching a school bus stopped with red lights flashing. Under state law, all vehicles must fully stop. Those lights mean a child is either boarding or departing a school bus. Drivers must stop regardless of their direction of travel. Additionally, school and police officials are asking parents to teach their children the importance of crosswalk safety.


TIPS FOR PEDESTRIANS:

- Always use crosswalks. It might seem like a hassle to walk halfway down the block to use a crosswalk, but it could prevent a serious accident.
- If a crosswalk is not available, look both ways and make sure the roadway is clear before attempting to cross the street.
- Parents should consider walking their child safely across the street when dropping them off for school.

TIPS FOR DRIVERS:

- Speed limits are slower in school zones for a reason. Slow down and watch for the high volume of pedestrian traffic in school zones associated with the start of school in the mornings and school release in the afternoons.
- Be aware that there are pedestrians and bicyclist out and about, whether you are on a busy street or in a residential neighborhood. Slow down and stay alert.
- Stop for pedestrians at intersections and crosswalks. If a crosswalk is not controlled by walk signal, state law dictates that drivers must stop for pedestrians entering the crosswalk.
- Never pass another car stopped at a crosswalk. Accidents often happen when one lane of traffic stops for a pedestrian to cross, but the other lanes of traffic do not.

FOR THE SAFETY OF OUR STUDENTS...Our students are only allowed to leave the school premises with an **adult listed on their RCAS Student Registration form**. We do have a closed campus ruling, and we do require an adult to come into the building to sign our sign out sheet when picking their student up for any reason. On rare occasions, we have students plan to go out for lunch—please know that a parent/guardian of each student included in the outing will be required to sign their student out into the hands of the driver. We request that parents be mindful of the brief lunch period and that students be absent only for their lunch period. A celebration planned for after-school hours would allow the students more time together. Thank you for your consideration.




PARENTS...*Please feel free to bring your student (only your student) lunch on special occasions, however we prefer you not to use Food Service Delivery (door dash, food dudes, grub hub etc.) to be sent to the school.*





LUNCH ACCOUNTS/FAMILY ACCESS... We are asking students to be aware of the balance left in their lunch accounts. Parents/guardians may continually keep track of their student's daily lunch consumption and balance by using Family Access on the RCAS.org website and may also deposit money with a credit card using the e~Funds link. To get started, parents can go to www.rcas.org – Parents and Students – Lunch Menus/Applications/eFunds and under the Meal Prices heading there is an [e~Funds link](#). This will take parents to the site where they can register and find a Registration Guide with step-by-step instructions about how to create an account to make payments as needed, or to schedule reoccurring payments. Before you begin, please be aware of the family phone number associated with the student. (You will then add student's "Other ID" number.) If parents do not know that number, they can go into Family Access and look under Student Information. Thank you for helping our students remain in "the black" with their accounts.

 **Parents...** Just a reminder that you can always email teachers by using their first.name.last.name@k12.sd.us Teachers can also be reached by calling the school at 394-4033 or through Canvas. As a rule, we would prefer that you not contact teachers through their personal Facebook accounts.



Students are asked frequently to check the "Custodial Area" or the main office for "Lost and Found" items. Be aware that 99% of the time, things are truly misplaced. All lost and found items will be tagged with the date that it was found. Items will stay in the same area by the custodial office for 2 weeks. Things not picked up at the end of 2 weeks will be boxed up and saved 1 more week in the custodial office. At the end of the 3rd week (Friday), that box will be taken to Goodwill. Every Friday after that, there will be one box going to Goodwill. We no longer have the area to store the large amounts of items that our "Lost and Found" accumulates.

JUST A REMINDER:

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| October 4, 2024 | EARLY RELEASE FRIDAY – 1:00 |
| October 9, 2024 | 6 th grade Musical 2:15 Cafeteria |
| October 10, 2024 | Parent/Teacher Conferences 4-7:30 Individual Classrooms |
| October 14, 2024 | NO SCHOOL - Native American Day |
| October 24, 2024 | Blood Drive @ West Cafeteria |
| October 25, 2024 | PTA BINGO 6:00-8:00pm WMS Cafeteria |
| October 31, 2024 | Happy Halloween 🎃 |





West Middle School

Attendance Matters!



"Chronic absenteeism is a serious problem in South Dakota. But what is it? Chronic absenteeism is when a student misses 10% or more of the school year. That's only two days a month – and it adds up. Since the 2018-2019 school year, the rate of chronic absenteeism has nearly doubled in South Dakota."

- South Dakota Department of Education

On Time, All the Time: Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow!



WHY ATTENDANCE IS CRUCIAL

- **Academic Success**
 - **Consistent Learning:** Regular attendance ensures continuous learning, preventing gaps in knowledge
 - **Better Grades:** Students with good attendance often achieve higher grades and test scores
- **Social Development**
 - **Building Relationships:** Attending school helps children make and maintain friendships
 - **Team Skills:** Participation in group projects and activities build teamwork skills
- **Future Readiness**
 - **Work Ethic:** Regular attendance helps cultivate discipline and strong work ethic
 - **Opportunities:** More chances to engage in extracurricular activities, sports, and special programs



DID YOU KNOW?

- **Chronic Absenteeism:** Missing just 2 days a month can lead to serious academic struggles
- **Early Patterns:** Attendance habits formed in elementary and middle school can impact high school success and beyond



HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR CHILD

- **Establish Routines**
 - **Consistent Schedule:** Set regular bedtime and wake-up times and limit screen time
 - **Prepare in Advance:** Organize school supplies and outfits the night before and keep in a consistent location
- **Stay Involved**
 - **Monitor Progress:** Keep track of assignments and school events
 - **Communicate:** Maintain open lines of communication with teachers and staff
- **Encourage Attendance:**
 - **Positive Reinforcement:** Praise and reward good attendance
 - **Highlight Importance:** Discuss long-term benefits of regular attendance



NEED HELP?

1003 Sioux S
Rapid City, SD



1

/ 1



cas.org

Greetings West Middle School families!

Our RCAS School Nurse vision is that all students will be healthy, safe, and ready to learn. Here are a few notes and ways you can help us achieve this vision:

- Medications at School:
 - If your student requires prescription medication during the school day, please contact me. Prescription medications must be kept in the nurse office with signed parent consent for medication administration. The prescription medication must be in the original container with a pharmacy label including student's name, prescribing physician's name, date of prescription, and directions for use.
 - Parent consent is also required for administration of over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen. Please provide the medication to the office in the original container with manufacturer label intact.
 - If your student has asthma or severe allergies that require use of an inhaler or EpiPen, please be sure these medications are in the office. If you prefer that your child self-carry the prescribed inhaler or EpiPen, please contact the nurse. A separate consent form (signed by parent AND physician) is required for self-administration of these medications in the school.
 - If you prefer your student to carry and self-administer over-the-counter non-prescription medication you must complete a Consent for Over the Counter / Non-Prescription Medication Self-Carry / Self-Administration form and submit it to the nurse. The medication must be in the original container. **Students are prohibited from transferring, delivering, or receiving any medication to or from another student** – please discuss this important safety topic with your student if choosing this option.
- Update contact information:
 - Please verify that your contact information is up to date in Skyward. Be sure there is an emergency contact listed as well. This will help to ensure we have proper contact information for any health-related issues. The emergency contact listed must be someone who can come to pick up your student from the school.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns relating to your child's health.

Thank you for your help in promoting a healthy and safe environment for our students! Best wishes for a great school year!

Jill Wilgers BSN, RN
Pinedale Elementary & West Middle School Nurse
Jill.Wilgers@k12.sd.us

INTRODUCING OUR NEW STAFF MEMBERS FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2024-2025

Jason Cerny: Mr. Cerny is West Middle School's new Assistant Principal. Mr. Cerny was born in Mitchell, SD. He has lived in Omaha, NE, Mitchell, SD, Spearfish, SD, and Rapid City. Mr. Cerny attended Canyon Lake Elementary, West Middle School and Stevens High School. Mr. Cerny attended South Dakota School of Mines for 2 years and finished his degree at Black Hills State University. Mr. Cerny received his master's degree from Dakota Wesleyan. He has worked at East Middle School, North Middle School and South Park Elementary. Mr. Cerny is married to wife, Ashley who is a 1st grade teacher at Rapid Valley Elementary. They have a son, Aven (6) and a daughter, Grayli (2). Mr. Cerny enjoys golf, virtually any sport, reading and fishing. Mr. Cerny was a former gator wrestler and American Ninja Warrior.

Bobbi McGeehon: Mrs. McGeehon is our new 7th/8th grade ELA teacher. She was born and raised in Rapid City, SD. Mrs. McGeehon went to Black Hawk Elementary, Dakota Middle School, Central High School and graduating from the University of South Dakota. Mrs. McGeehon worked at the Black Hills Regional Eye Institute for 10 years. She has been married to Matt McGeehon for 1 year, who is a custodian for the Rapid City School District and has 2 children, Ezra (10) and Briar (8) who attend Grandview Elementary School. Mrs. McGeehon's favorite hobby is reading. Last year she read 52 books! She also enjoys hiking, kayaking, and exploring the Black Hills. Mrs. McGeehon is also a big animal lover, especially dogs.

Emily Kulish: Miss Kulish is West's new 7th grade Math teacher. Miss Kulish was born and raised in Rapid City. She received her degree from Black Hills State University. Miss Kulish taught at Valley View Elementary for 3 years and South Canyon Elementary for 5 years. She has coached volleyball at Stevens High School for the past 6 years. Miss Kulish has a dog-baby (Labra Dane) named Benson. In her free time she enjoys volleyball, mountain biking, skiing, traveling, reading, and hanging out with friends. She is so excited to be apart of the community at West!

Kimberly Bertrand: Mrs. Bertrand is our new Special Education teacher for the 7th grade. Mrs. Bertrand was born and raised in Bakersfield, California, but lived in San Luis Obispo, California for ten years before moving to Rapid City. Mrs. Bertrand formerly taught 3rd and 6th grade general education at Endeavour Elementary in Bakersfield, California and 4th, 5th and Special Education at Santa Margarita Elementary in Santa Margarita, California for 10 years. She is married to husband, Tony and they have a daughter, Paisley, a dog, Molly, and a puppy, Dixon. In her free time she enjoys camping, spending time with family and friends, reading, shopping, and traveling. Mrs. Bertrand says she is so thankful to be teaching at West! And to be part of such an amazing team.

Nicholes Wiest: Mr. Wiest is West's new Lifeways Counselor. Mr. Wiest was born and raised in Rapid City except for the 5 years spent in Vermillion, SD attending the University of South Dakota. Go Yotes!!! Mr. Wiest received his Bachelor of Science degree in Anthropology, and a Juris Doctorate degree from the University of South Dakota School of Law. He previously worked as a Guest Assistant at the Hope Center. Mr. Wiest has a Dachshund named Clementine and enjoys video games, muscle cars and owns a '68 Chevelle.

Mary Mendoza: Ms. Mendoza is our new Structured Academics teacher in the Special Education Department. Ms. Mendoza was born in Cebu, Philippines and lived there for 31 years before living in Morocco for 2 years for work. Ms. Mendoza graduated with a bachelor's degree of Education in Special Education and formerly worked in 3 institutions: 2 schools in the Philippines and 1 in Morocco. Ms. Mendoza comes from a big family; she is the youngest of 9 children. Ms. Mendoza enjoys singing Karaoke, reading novels, watching movies, hiking, and taking care of plants.

McKenzie Becker: Miss Becker is our new paraprofessional in the Special Education Department. Miss Becker was born in Rapid City and grew up in Keystone, SD. Miss Becker received her bachelor's degree from Black Hills State University and worked as a Rec Assistant at the Spearfish Rec Center and a server at Texas Roadhouse Restaurant. Miss Becker's family consist of mom, Laura, sisters, Olivia, Brooklynn and brothers, Mason, and Lincoln. Miss Becker loves to be active, play sports, workout, hike, swim, watch movies and travel.

Leah Wytosick: Mrs. Wytosick is West's new 6th grade Special Education teacher. Mrs. Wytosick was born in Minnesota and lived in Utah and South Dakota. She graduated from Black Hills State University with a degree in Special Education and Secondary Social Studies Education. She is married to Jake, and they have 2 boys, Jack (11), Luke (8), and 2 dogs, Penny and Shae. She enjoys hiking, fishing, camping, rock hunting, reading, and card games.

