



# Dakota Community Unit School District 201

Nik Butenhoff, Superintendent  
Ginnie Cunningham, Elementary Principal

Jenny Keffer, Jr./Sr. High Principal  
Kevin Cline, Assistant Principal

## Superintendent's Report

Mr. Nik Butenhoff

I hope everyone's new year is off to a great start! We had a great finish to 2023 across the campus which you can read about in the building updates. In the admin building we were able to make two additions to our staff.

Natalie Wachter started in November as our HRIS (Human Resources Information System) Coordinator. This position was created by modifying the bookkeeper position which focused on district finances. Natalie will become the new payroll technician, but the primary purpose of the job is to support our staff's HR needs. Some of the things Natalie will work on include developing and conducting new employee orientations, maintain all personnel files for the District, manage employee benefit programs, and complete all tax reporting. Natalie (Olsen) is a Dakota grad and has already proven to be a great addition to the District.

We also hired Patty Monks to serve as the administrative assistant to the superintendents. Patty was previously employed by Heritage Woods in Freeport and has a lot of experience in public relations and marketing. Her primary job duty in this role is to serve as the school board secretary. Patty will support the coordination of putting together the board meetings each month and create meeting minutes for each meeting. I am

really excited to have Patty join the team. Her first day was January 8th.

Thanks so much and GO INDIANS!

Natalie Wachter



Patty Monks



## Upcoming Events

### January:

- January is School Board Appreciation Month
- January 10: PTO Meeting @ 7 at the Jr/Sr. HS
- January 12: DES, Jr. & Sr. HS report cards available in Skyward
- January 15: **No School**, Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- January 16: School Board Meeting
- January 17: Mini-Cheer Camp
- January 18: Mini-Cheer Camp Performance
- January 19: **No School** for **PreK**
- January 19: CareerTEC Field Trip for all sophomores
- January 26: 100th Day of School
- January 29: District Spelling Bee
- January 31: CareerTEC presentation in HS cafeteria



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## Dakota Jr./Sr. High News

Mrs. Keffer

The Junior and Senior High School celebrated the end of first semester, along with the start of winter break, by engaging in our first Winter Wonderland! The PTO donated and served hot chocolate, students made ornaments, the band played, and several students joined in our reindeer games assembly. Our fun also included gifts for several students, made possible by a donation from the Ladies of the Lake.

Our return to school marked the beginning of the second semester. Junior and Senior High report cards will be posted on Skyward by Friday, January 12.

SAT prep in math and English is starting for juniors during homeroom. This will continue until the SAT exam in April.

On January 31, Brian Greene, Director of CareerTEC, will be in the DHS cafeteria at 6:00 p.m. to give an informative presentation on CareerTEC. Consider attending this event if you would like to learn more about CareerTEC!



## Dakota Elementary School News

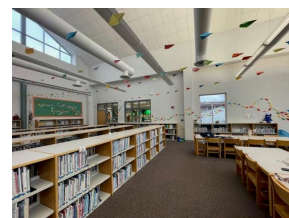
Mrs. Cunningham

The Elementary School finished up first semester with music programs, winter classroom celebrations, and a spirit week. We are back to school and looking forward to a great second semester of learning and growing.

Over winter break a group of staff, led by Mrs. Metz “revamped” our DES Library decor with the theme “Where will reading take you?” We are working to transform the DES Library into a 21st Century Learning Experience for our students and staff. Students and staff were excited to enjoy the beginning of our library “revamp.” Stay tuned for more upgrades!

We have added two new teachers to DES in our Special Education Department. Mrs. Tina Howard will work with our K-3rd grade students and Mrs. Jayne Kleckler will work with our 4-6th grade students. Please join me in welcoming them to Dakota!

Students began our second iReady testing window on January 8 with assessments in ELA and Math. We are looking forward to celebrating the 100th Day of School at DES on January 26!





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## Technology

Mr. Ross. Eberle - IT Director

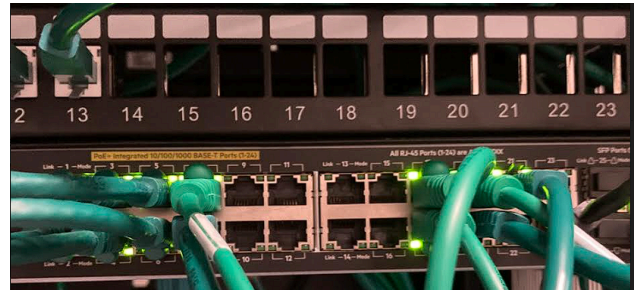
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In early December, we put out a bid via E-Rate (an annual Federal grant for schools and libraries to help offset the cost of network devices) for new network equipment, the next step in that process will be completed in January to work towards securing funding. We hope to use these funds to purchase new wireless access points and wired switches. If all goes according to plan, these devices would be installed this upcoming summer.

Over winter break, we reconfigured the firewall and the core network equipment to ease the load on the firewall and to add a layer of security to the school district technology. The server that manages printing was upgraded to the most recent release as the version it was running was from 2018.

Winter break also gave the technology department the opportunity to upgrade and add additional security cameras. We added a dozen new cameras in places that either had no coverage or existing cameras that were analog and outdated. We are confident that interior areas of the schools have a reasonable amount of coverage and the next areas for improvement will be exterior work that

may need to wait until the weather cooperates.



## Maintenance Update

Mr. Tim Wilson

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To close out the new year we had a couple of large projects go out for bid. In December the board approved a contract with Atlas Sheet Metal to install a new roof over the library in our elementary building. That work will likely happen during the summer months. Another bid we had in December was to replace a condenser unit in the elementary building to ensure our air conditioning works properly.

We also made some improvements to our high school's greenhouse in December. We installed new louvers, louver actuators, ceiling fans and relocated the thermostats. We are hopeful this will better regulate the temperature there and improve the building's heating efficiency.