

Iowa Valley Tiger Tracks

Education: A Community Partnership

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by Donita Joens, Iowa Valley CSD Superintendent

The legislators have a very difficult job in balancing the State's budget, much the same way our school district or any other place of business has. We greatly appreciate their efforts, once again, in trying to meet the demands of Iowa's many priorities.

I am sharing my views about one of these legislative priorities, the State Penny for School Infrastructure or SAVE funds. SAVE was first established in 2008 and will expire on December 31, 2029. This original 20-year timeframe matched the bonding period needed for most school projects such as additions and new structures. So here we are, about ten years away from the expiration date of 2029. You may be thinking ten years is a long time, but not from a borrowing standpoint. The typical bonding period is 20 years and school districts across the state are feeling the pinch of a shortened bonding period. With low interest rates and unmet needs, now is not the right time to turn to property taxes to meet these unmet needs. SAVE is a means of not increasing property taxes.

We encourage the support of extending the state penny beyond 2029 for school infrastructure (SAVE) be-

cause it is a vital funding stream for our school district. Here are just a few of the major uses of SAVE funds in our school district:

- Update our security systems at both the elementary and junior/senior high school with cameras, programmed door locks, and fobs
- Technology purchases- Chromebooks, iPads, access point infrastructure updates, and desk-top/laptop computer
- New gym facility at the elementary so our students could have physical education classes in a gym and not the cafeteria and also so our junior high students could play basketball games in a gym and not on the stage of our auditorium- extremely unsafe
- Fitness center for health and wellness activities
- Boilers
- Parking lot updates
- Concession stand
- Roof updates
- New windows

SAVE has given our district the opportunity to provide excellent education for our students. Without the extension of SAVE, these projects would not be possible as general fund and/or PPEL would have to be used and it would not cover the expenses for the above-listed projects.

One of the main concerns I hear from legislators is the use of SAVE funds to update sporting facilities. We recently finished a new gym/fitness facility at Iowa Valley in Marengo. The junior high students were playing their games on the stage of our auditorium. Thanks to SAVE funds, we were able to provide a regulation-sized basketball court used for almost all of our sports and the gym is also used for elementary physical education classes throughout the entire day instead of using the cafeteria. Our students deserved more than playing games on the stage of an auditorium or having PE classes in the cafeteria. SAVE was a "life-saving" fund for our kids.

I appreciate the service legislators provide for our great state. Please express your opinions with your legislative representatives about how important SAVE funds are for our school district. Representatives for the Iowa Valley CSD are Thomas Gerhold and David Maxwell and our district's senator is Tim Kapucian. Please reach out to our legislators and ask them to extend or repeal the sunset of the state penny for school infrastructure. Your efforts will be rewarded with updates in technology, equipment, buses, and building infrastructure just to name a few.

March 2019

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A Champion On and Off the Mat

Polly Gunzenhauser

A champion on and off the mat Gareth Sims is an inspiration and positive role model to both the young and old. He has touched the hearts of many including my first grade class and a specific first grader named Tatem Miller all of whom are students at Iowa Valley Elementary. This year I was asked by our guidance counselor if first grade could use a mentor. Of course I said absolutely. Gareth standing over six feet tall could be a bit intimidating to a 6 or 7 year old, but not in our class. The students greet him with open arms to the point of disappointment if he cannot come to our class due to a test or other obligation at the high school. He is a wonderful asset to our class demonstrating his patience kindness and willingness to help. Everyone wants Gareth to help them with their math whether it is one on one support, a small group or just a smile to say you are doing great keep up the good work. It is awesome to see the excitement on my student's faces when

Gareth is around. Tatem has become one of Gareth's super fans not only in the classroom but in wrestling also as Gareth is a powerhouse on the wrestling mat as well. You can find Tatem mat side cheering Gareth on. Gareth is never too busy too let Tatem know that he is happy to see him too. Gareth will forever be a memory in the lives of my class and Tatem Miller. We wish Gareth the best as he goes on to the State Wrestling meet. Thanks for your dedication in all that you do Gareth Sims.



Kindergarten round-up

Pam Meier and Brant Andreassen,
Teachers

KINDERGARTEN ROUND-UP IS
APRIL 16, 2019

The Iowa Valley School District invites children who will be 5 years old by September 15, 2019, to attend Kindergarten Round-Up on Tuesday, April 16, 2019, from 8:10 to 12 noon.

There will be no regular kindergarten classes held that day. Parents only, of incoming students, are asked to attend the Parent Informational Meeting on Monday, April 15, from 5:30-6:30 in the elementary media center. Children are required to bring a sack lunch with beverage to the round-up day. The school will provide drinks and snacks for a snack break that morning.

Families who have a child eligible for kindergarten must call the Iowa Valley Elementary Office at 642-5422 to pre-register their child and to receive the required forms needed for enrollment. In addition, if you know of an eligible child within the Iowa Valley District who may not have this information, please inform them of this important day. Students enrolled in the Iowa Valley Preschool at this time will receive a kindergarten registration packet from their teacher.

At the Parent Informational Meeting, parents will receive information on what their children will be doing at round-up, important enrollment information, and information about the kindergarten program and curriculum at Iowa Valley. The meeting will begin at 5:30, with building tours following until 6:30 p.m. The teachers, school nurse, and Mrs. Cindy Miller, Principal, will be available at that time to also answer questions. Again, this meeting is for parents only.

Please bring any completed forms, including health and immunization records, enrollment forms, and the child's birth certificate (which will be copied and returned to you) that evening. When parents enter the meeting, they should look for class lists posted that will indicate which room their child should go to for Kindergarten Round-up. All children will spend time in both kindergarten classrooms on April 16, as well as touring the building. Please

realize that the classroom your child will be assigned to for Round-Up may not be the classroom that they will be assigned to for their kindergarten school year.

During Kindergarten Round-Up, incoming students will receive a hearing screening done by the Grant Wood Area Education Agency. Students will also receive a vision screening done by the Marengo Lion's Club. If there are concerns about your child's vision or hearing, a form will be sent home with the child. Further information will be shared at the parent meeting on April 15 about these screenings. Incoming students will also receive a general pre-kindergarten readiness screening done by Iowa Valley staff. If there are concerns about your child's readiness for kindergarten, the parent will be contacted by the classroom teacher, Mrs. Meier or Mr. Andreassen. However, please feel free to contact them with any questions or concerns you may have about kindergarten readiness or how their Round-Up day went. Mrs. Ashlea Cronbaugh, Iowa Valley Preschool Teacher, works with us on getting to know your student if they were enrolled in her preschool program. If your child has not attended preschool, it would be helpful to let a teacher know, so that we can best serve your student.

Parents who are preparing their child for kindergarten in August of 2019 may be wondering what kinds of things their child should know prior to coming to kindergarten. Preschool programs are excellent experiences for incoming kindergarteners. We find that children who have completed at least one year of preschool make a very easy transition into full-day kindergarten at Iowa Valley! Here are some general kindergarten skills you can be working on at home:

Social Skills: Is your child comfortable being away from home and/or daycare and able to follow directions from other adults? Does your child interact regularly with other children of the same age? Does your child practice good manners and respect for others?

Emotional Skills: Is your child able to separate from you for several hours comfortably? Does your child react normally to everyday ups and downs and schedule changes within

a normal day? Is your child able to communicate their needs to adults?

Cognitive Skills: Is your child able to name most letters of the alphabet and has a good beginning knowledge of letter sounds? Is your child able to count to 20, can name colors and shapes, and can identify numbers to 10? Is your child able to write their first name? Is your child beginning to read simple words and environmental print? Is your child eager to listen to books on a regular basis? Is your child able to draw a basic stick person or self-portrait? Is your child beginning to learn the sounds that letters make?

Physical Skills: Can your child run, skip, hop and jump? Can your child hold and use a pencil, scissors, fork and spoon easily? Can your child sit attentively in place for a period of 15 minutes or more? Is your child building fine-motor skills through use of a computer, tablet or other technology?

Self-help Skills: Can your child take care of their bathroom needs, button, zip or snap their own clothes, or ask for help from an adult when needed? Is your child familiar with being responsible for their own belongings? Is your child able to open a milk or juice carton or snack packages independently? Is your child able to finish a meal in 25 minutes?

These skills are very general and are only a recommendation of what will benefit your child and will help make the transition to public school easier. In addition, this last recommendation is of great importance:

Behavior Skills: Is your child able to follow directions and expectations (rules) from other adults?

At Iowa Valley, our staff follows Positive Behavior Support (PBS) expectations (rules). Each fall, kindergarteners are taught good behavior skills in the classroom, lunchroom, bathroom, hallways, assemblies, playground, and for doing homework. When positive behavior is achieved, good behavior results in awards in the form of Tiger Paws, individual prizes, classroom prizes, or school-wide prizes. When the desired behavior is not achieved, or misbehavior occurs, the student may receive consequences and the appropriate behavior or expectation is reviewed and

re-taught. In some cases, parents receive a behavior report as to what behavior has occurred. This system has been very successful in our elementary and it is an important component of your child's kindergarten experience.

In closing, parents can make the kindergarten transition go smoothly by reviewing the skills mentioned above and working on those that need support. We find that the biggest adjustment for kindergarteners is not only the academic requirements, but the child's ability to follow the expectations (rules) and to do so independently and consistently to receive their best education and to enhance the daily education of the other children within the classroom.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns as your child prepares for this exciting time!

Fifth Grade News

The spring of the school year brings a flurry of activities in our fifth grade classrooms. The fourth and fifth grades will be going to the Herbert Hoover Museum to on March 15th for a production of Heroes of the Underground Railroad. The fourth, fifth and sixth grades are preparing for their spring band/vocal concerts. Students are getting ready for their student led conferences and are eager to share their work. Our MTSS groups have been studying the Holocaust with a shared reading of *Number the Stars*. Colonial life and the American Revolution are the topics of study in social studies. In science students are studying mixtures and solutions and investigating how to separate them. In math we have been working with multiplying and dividing decimals, and using strategies to solve word problems. We are looking forward to warmer weather and the end of winter.

Amy Jacobson

Ross Karsten

“A Night Under the Lights” Prom April 27, 2019

There are some changes with the schedule for prom this year. To try to streamline the process, we will be coordinating the Grand March with the dance and pictures. The Junior class has begun it's planning and is excited to announce the schedule and how things will be run this year. We will be taking our own photos with the help of Martin Wieck and Ashton Linnell in order to reduce cost and provide funds for the groups in the future. Picture order forms will be available later this spring closer to the event.

Pictures will be taken during the Grand March and group pictures will be taken following the Grand March before the dance starts. The Grand March will be in the auditorium, beginning at 7:30 pm, and all activities will follow from there. There may be a small fee to attend the Grand March. These funds will go toward the after prom activities cost. The Junior class committees are in charge of decorations, dance music, picture orders, and clean up with the help from all of the junior class members. Parents for Prom will be organizing the after-prom activities and helping with the organization of the Grand March. Parents for Prom will help the Junior class with decoration of the front hallway the Friday evening prior to prom. The schedule is subject to be modified slightly as necessary.

“A Night Under the Lights” Prom April 27, 2019 Schedule:

Grand March (auditorium) 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm

--once a couple has been announced and made their walk through, they will proceed to have pictures taken if ordered

--more parent pictures and group pictures will be taken following the Grand March

Dance (auditorium) 9:00 pm - 11:30 pm

After Prom Activities (in gym) 11:30 pm - 3:30 pm

--doors will be locked at midnight

Junior Activity Sponsors- Danielle Smith and Tricia Hocamp
Parents for Prom