



Parent Newsletter
School of Technology & Arts
Fall 2018

Dear Families,

The beginning of the school year has gotten off to an excellent start. I want to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone for being so welcoming to me as I have started my first year at SOTA I.

Every day I am inspired and encouraged by our young people, families, and staff: we truly have some of the best in the district. I have enjoyed getting to know the students and families.

It was a busy Fall as students jumped back into the swing of things after summer. We were fortunate to have students in grades 2 through 5 recently had the opportunity to learn about cartooning and create their own character from Emmy-award winning cartoonist Drew Schmidt.

We are also very excited to officially have Hamilton School be designated as a Community School this year. With this designation comes many new opportunities for learning and expanding upon the ways in which we can help meet the needs of our students, families, and communities at Hamilton as well as SOTA I. Sara (Rugg) Jackson was hired as our Community School Coordinator.

As hard as it is to believe, we have finished the first quarter of the school year. Our staff is excited about many of the opportunities we have planned for the upcoming months.

Sincerely,

Ben Burns, Principal

Upcoming Music Concert for Grades 4 and 5

December 6th at 5:30 p.m.



No School

November 21-23
Thanksgiving Break

December 24-31
Winter Break

January 18
Staff Development

January 21
Martin Luther King Day

Early Release

K-5 dismiss at 1:15 pm

November 9
&
January 13

Child Care During These Days

During "early release" there is after school Boys & Girls Club as usual, just two hours earlier.

Mark Your Calendars for Parent Teacher Conferences
March 11 and March 14
Watch for notices coming home later in February.

Positive Behavior in Schools (PBIS) Events

Monthly both Hamilton and SOTA 1 Schools have an event that promotes positive behavior. Your child may have told you about the “Bubble Run” event held this last fall and on November 9th we will be having an assembly celebrating the exemplary acts of kindness that students have shown during October and promoting our theme of “Be Safe, Be Respectful, and Be Responsible”. For November students will be focusing on honesty. What a fun event to celebrate working together in our school community!

Highly Qualified Teachers

The School District of La Crosse takes pride in hiring only highly qualified teachers. This means they all are fully trained, certified, and often experienced in the position they teach. Our faculty consistently has a high percentage of advanced degrees, and we do a good job of retaining some of the top staff in the state and the nation. Life events, such as retirement, childbirth, or illness, sometimes cause a need for a long- term substitute teacher. When this happens we always make every effort to hire a highly qualified substitute. All are certified teachers and most are licensed in the area in which they are substituting. In rare cases it may be impossible to find a teacher with a particular certification, such as special education. This may result in the district asking the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction for an emergency license for such a teacher. If you ever have any questions about the certification of any of our staff, please call me, Ben Burns, principal of Hamilton/SOTA 1.

Student Performance Report

The Wisconsin School District Performance Report (SDPR) is an on-line report published by the Department of Public Instruction. The SDPR provides a comparison of data across schools districts in the same athletic conference, comparable districts by enrollment, as well as our district schools’ data. You can reach this website directly at <https://apps2.dpi.wi.gov/sdpr/spr.action>

Family Night

On Tuesday, December 11th, Hamilton will be hosting a family night. It will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and the organization called BLACK, Black Leaders Acquiring Collective Knowledge, will be here to encourage wellness in regards to emotional and financial aspects.

Elementary Benchmark Brochures

The elementary benchmark brochures and the Elementary Parent Guide are available on-line. You may view them at our web page, www.lacrosseschools.org, , click on “District” and then “Curriculum and Instruction” and find the link labeled “Elementary Parent Guide and Brochures” to search for the grade you would like to view. A copy is available in the school office.



Steering Committee News

The date for the next Steering Committee meeting is Tuesday, December 4th, at 6:30 p.m. in our library. All parents are welcome. The Steering Committee meetings are generally up to one hour long and are held the first Tuesday of the month.

Help our Schools...Every little bit counts!

Please collect the following and send them to your child's teacher or drop them in the hallway set of drawers by room 212:

Milk Moola...Ongoing throughout the year.

Box Tops for Education...Ongoing throughout the year.

Your contribution makes a difference!



Skyward Family Access to School Information

Each parent/guardian of a student enrolled at La Crosse School District has on-line access to their child's school information and is able to make meal payments on-line. If you would like to access this, call or stop in the school office to get your log-in and password. Family Access is found at www.lacrosseschools.org

Do you know you can change your skylert setting through Family Access? What is skylert? This is a system our district uses to notify parents of important events. For instance, Hamilton uses this to remind parents of early release days. You can set this up to receive phone calls or e-mails.

Year Round Option for Families to Update Information

As the School District of La Crosse continues to move towards additional access through Family Access, families now have the ability to update their own phone numbers, email addresses, emergency contacts, doctor, dentist, and hospital information throughout the school year. You will also have the ability to update your address.

**** Updating your address will still require verification. Your address will not be updated in our system until you provide this verification. Please provide address verification (utility bill, phone bill, or mortgage/lease) to your child's school or the Registrar's office at the Hogan Administrative Center at 807 East Ave. S.**

Directions to edit your contact information preferences in Skyward Family Access:

- 1) [Go to www.lacrosseschools.org](http://www.lacrosseschools.org)
- 2) Click the 'Skyward Family Access' button
- 3) Log in. If you have never logged in, you will need to establish account credentials by contacting the administrative assistant in your child's school.
- 4) Select 'Skylert' from the left side of the screen.
- 5) If you have more than one child, you will need to repeat this process for each.

Did you know about La Crosse Community Events?

The La Crosse School District now shares many community activity flyers on our web page. You may access these flyers at <https://www.lacrosseschools.org/parents/community-events/>



Facebook News

SOTA teachers, including some specialist, use Facebook! Some staff use Facebook to communicate with families. Look for them and “like” them to get updates.

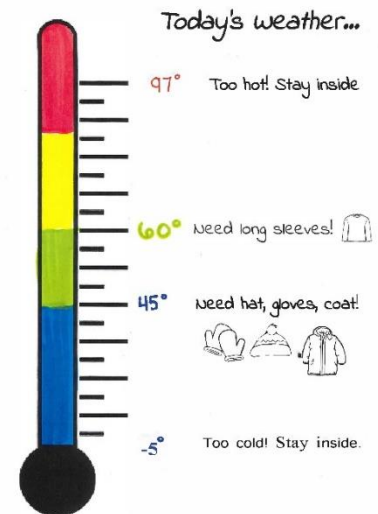
Food Pantry

Once a month Hamilton and SOTA 1 Schools provide a bag of groceries for families in need. Families may sign up to pick up one bag per month and any additional items presented in our foyer area of the school on the last school Thursday of the month at the end of the school day. This service is provided September through May.

BRRIt's Cold Outside

As the weather is cold now, please help to send appropriate outdoor clothing (coats, hats, mittens, boots, snow pants) with your child to school for recess time. See the picture for our school guidelines.

Snow will come soon too. If there is a winter weather storm and you wonder if school has been canceled please listen to our local television stations and radio stations for listings of school closings.



Walkin' Wednesdays!

Walking to school is a healthy way to commute to school. Through Safe Routes to School our school supports a “Walkin’ Wednesday” Program whereby students can meet at Powell Park at 7:40 a.m. and walk as a group to school. This program runs September 12th to December 12th and will resume in the Spring.

Counselor Corner

Mrs. Bertram is visiting classrooms each week. The month of November and December will focus on Kindness and Compassion. We will discuss how these acts of kindness can be small gestures but can have a big and positive impact on those around us.

Please reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns about your child. If you are in need of extra support or resources, please reach out to me.

Community School Corner

My name is Sara (Rugg) Jackson and I am Hamilton Elementary's Community School Coordinator. This is a new position at Hamilton Elementary School, and I am very excited to be apart of such a fantastic community of students, parents, families, and staff!

This is Hamilton's first school year as a full-service Community School. This is a very exciting time for our students, parents, families, staff, neighborhood and community! Some of you may be wondering what a Community School is...

A Community School is:

- A strategy for organizing school and community resources around student success.
- A way to remove barriers, align resources, and ensure supports for all students.
- It's a mindset-not a program.
- Changing the way that we "do" school and the way we support students.

Now, you be asking WHY a Community School?

- Preach love, equity, partnership
- Our kids are coming to school with more than one backpack, and most of them are invisible, i.e., hunger, sickness, homelessness, addition, violence, etc.
- Responsive to the needs of all students, school, and neighborhood.
- It's an equity strategy.

If your family is in need of any support or resources please feel free to reach out to me. Happy Fall!



Art News

In Art, we had a visiting artist in grades 3 through 5 who is an Emmy award winning cartoonist named Drew Schmidt. He worked on the series Danger & Eggs which is on amazon prime. Students worked with him on creating their own cartoons. What a great opportunity for our students!

PE News

With the weather turning colder there are a few things to keep in mind. Students and adults need to be even more mindful of how much physical activity they are getting every day. Ideally, an elementary age student should get 60 minutes of physical activity a day at a minimum! This is an addition to any physical activity they are doing at school. Activity should be hard enough to make your heart rate stay above 120 beats per minute. Walking usually does not get you to this level. Winter time physical activity can be a bit more challenging but here are some ideas to get you started: go for a walk (take your dog...your goldfish might not like it though), go sledding, jump rope, play hopscotch, shovel the sidewalk or driveway, build a snow fort, play catch, take a hike, play at the park, have a scavenger hunt, go snowshoeing, go skiing, build a snowman.

Lastly, **please be sure to come to school with a pair of shoes that can be worn in gym.** Snow boots increase the chance of rolling an ankle or tripping and falling.



Keep moving!

Music News

As published in the Music Department's Newsletter at the beginning of the year there are three concerts this year. Our school along with students from Hamilton will perform on the following dates at our gym:

Grade 4 and 5	December 6th at 5:30 p.m.
Grade Kindergarten and 1	February 21st at 5:00 p.m.
Grade 2 and 3	March 7th at 5:00 p.m.

Mark your calendars now! More information as to what time your student will need to be at school and what room to report to will come as the date gets closer.

Drama News

Mr Nofsinger, the Drama teacher, is collecting plastic bags for a project. The more colorful the better. Mark your calendars....

- K/1's on December 20th @1:30 Parent Program Performance
- 2/3's on December 21st @ 1:30 Parent Program Performance
- **All school informance on May 29 at 6:00**



School Nutrition's Harvest of the Month

Each month our school kitchen serves a harvest item. You can find our Harvest of the Month listing a garden item and many tips including a recipe at www.lacrosseschools.org/sota November's Harvest of the Month is kale. Did you know one cup of kale has 35 calories and provides vitamins A & C, calcium and potassium. Fun Facts...Kale actually tastes sweeter after it is frozen or exposed to frost! Look for it at fall or winter farmers' markets for best flavor. Kale can be green, white, reddish green, purple, or bluish green and the leaves can be many shapes depending on variety. Curly kale is the most popular variety, and is most likely to be found in grocery stores. Look for other varieties like Lacinato (or Dino) kale or Red Russian at farmers' markets! Substitute kale in recipes that use spinach or collard greens or add chopped fresh or frozen kale to vegetable or bean soups. Kale can be used to make a green smoothie! Remove the stems from kale leaves, and blend with frozen fruit, yogurt and milk.

GROW La Crosse Garden News



Autumn garden lessons have allowed students to practice the scientific method as they make observations and ask questions about what is growing in the garden and what changes have occurred. We have focused on the plant parts that we eat, particularly the roots.

Students are exploring the history and importance of food preservation, both ancient and modern. There are many factors impacting food availability that are beyond control, including climate and the natural life cycles of plants.

If you are interested in more information on the school garden, volunteering or other opportunities through GROW La Crosse, as well as opportunities for donating or sponsorship, learn more at www.growlacrosse.org.



Health Room News

Greetings Hamilton/SOTA I families! As the cold weather is upon us, please remember to be mindful of ways to stay healthy and away from illness! While illness tends to be inevitable, it's still important to practice healthy habits every day. Remember to wash your hands often and thoroughly at any opportunity, cover your coughs & sneezes -- and remind your children to do the same. Also, taking as many preventative steps like getting enough sleep, having a healthy breakfast, and limiting screen time as often as possible will help to keep your entire family healthy & happy!

Also, this is the season for head lice. As scary as it often seems for families, it's simply a nuisance and is very common. Practicing common sense regarding sharing hats, hair brushes/combs and hair ties is truly the best way to keep lice from coming into your home. Lice is most commonly spread by head to head contact in people that are in close proximity to each other for a long period of time. There are many resources available on the School District of La Crosse website under School Health but I can provide more information as needed as well.

Yours in health,

Amber Peters, Health Assistant & Michelle Rank, District Nurse

It is the policy of the School District of La Crosse, pursuant to s.118.13 Wisconsin Statutes and P19 that no person on the basis of sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability, may be denied admission to any public school in this district or be denied participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be discriminated against in any curricular, co/extracurricular, pupil services, recreational, or other program or activity.