

## Valedictorian



Abby Vehrenkamp is the daughter of Jay and Linda Vehrenkamp. While in high school, Abby has been an active member in Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), softball, Belltallica, Jazz Band, Pep Band, Solo & Ensemble, Dairyland Honors Band, National Honor Society (NHS), Drama Club, Yearbook, Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD), and B-T Club. While being in these groups, Abby has been the FBLA chapter president, NHS chapter vice president, and a captain of the softball team. During her time in these groups, she also has been a three-time state qualifier in FBLA, three-time state qualifier in solo & ensemble, and a part of the First and Second Team Dairyland All-Conference Teams in softball. Outside of school, Abby works for B-T Cleaning Service and is an active member of North Beaver Creek Lutheran Church. In addition, she enjoys anything to do with New York City or Broadway, and watching the La Crosse Loggers Baseball team. In the fall, Abby plans to attend UW - La Crosse and major in marketing.

## Salutatorian



William Vehrenkamp is the son of Steven and Tammy Vehrenkamp. While in high school, Will has been active in Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Beatallica (advanced handbell group), varsity High Quiz Bowl, National Honor Society (NHS), Yearbook Club, band, choir, vocal jazz choir, Teen Court, B-T Club, pep band, cross country, and baseball. He also has participated in Drama Club, playing major roles in the last two productions. Leadership positions that Will has held in high school include FBLA chapter treasurer, captain of the High Quiz Bowl team, NHS chapter president, and senior class president. In addition, he has been a three-time state qualifier in FBLA, a three-time state solo ensemble qualifier, and he has participated in Dairyland Honors Band and Dairyland Honors Choir. Outside of school, Will works for B-T Cleaning Service, likes to sing, play trumpet, play volleyball, and is an active member of North Beaver Creek Lutheran Church. In the fall, Will plans on attending UW-Madison and majoring in management or music.



## From the Desk of the High School Principal...

Dana Eide, 7-12 Principal

Fourth quarter has begun! The rest of the school year is going to fly! Spring sports are well underway. Several music contests and programs will be taking place. Before we know it, we will be celebrating eighth grade recognition and graduation!

Please stay connected with your child's grades so that he or she ends the year with the grades that will make you both happy. If you need your Skyward password to log into your child's grades, or if you would like help setting up regular email notifications, please contact the office, and we would be happy to assist you.

### Eighth Grade Recognition

Family and friends are invited to celebrate the achievements of our eighth grade students as they complete their time in middle school and prepare for entrance into high school. The recognition event will take place on **Thursday, June 2, at 2:00PM** in the United Campus Auditorium. Everyone is welcome to attend!

### Baccalaureate & Senior Awards Night

There are two special events for the seniors prior to graduation. On Sunday, May 22, all seniors, their families, and friends are invited to attend the Baccalaureate at 5:30PM, which is coordinated by the seniors and local clergy, followed by the Senior Awards Night at 6:30PM, when many seniors will be recognized for their accomplishments and awarded scholarships. These events will take place in the United Campus Auditorium. A reception for the seniors will take place between the events from 6:00-6:30PM in the commons.

### Senior Graduation

On Saturday, May 28, at 1:00PM in the middle-high school gymnasium, we will be celebrating the seniors' successful completion of their education at the graduation ceremony. Everyone is welcome to attend the ceremony. Tickets are not required. Doors will open at 11:00AM. Because the seniors do not take their gowns with them, we will have a backdrop set up near the library for photo opportunities with family and friends.

### Summer School

Summer school is an opportunity for students to make up classes or credits that they are lacking. Students who fail a class at 50-64% may receive credit for that class by completing required work during summer school. **Students are expected to make up deficient credits during summer school.** If a student fails to recover credits during summer school, he or she will be scheduled to retake the course during the school year. Required classes that are failed with a percentage lower than 50 must be retaken when the class is offered again. **2016 Summer School: June 13 to June 24, 2016, from 10:00am until 2:00pm.** Students who qualify for summer school are expected to be present every day until their work is completed.

## 10 Tips for Reducing Homework Stress

By Lori Lite

- Purchase a second set of used textbooks to keep at home. This is especially helpful for children who have difficulty juggling assignments and organizing. It is also a healthy choice for your child's spine. *Amazon.com* makes it easy and affordable.
- Break it down. Set smaller goals to complete a portion of the assignment. Reward your child with a break. Let your child set a timer to alert them that their break is over. This eliminates power struggles and empowers children.
- Encourage children to review work each night so that when it is time for a test they are not overloaded with information.
- Use affirmations or positive statements like, "I can do it." This is a fun way to introduce positive statements.
- Set up an area in your home dedicated to homework and studying. An area clear of chaos makes it easier to focus and feel calm.
- Teach children relaxation techniques. Take a deep breath in and say "Ahhhhh" to release anger and frustration. Stress management should be introduced during calm moments so they can be implemented when needed.
- Have a healthy snack or even a meal before homework. It is difficult to concentrate and feel balanced when hungry or eating sugar. I actually served a full dinner at 3:30 when my kids got off the bus and before they sat down for homework. This adjustment made a huge difference.
- Brain breaks should be taken. Don't expect children to be able to sit still for long periods of time. Let them move as needed. Blow bubbles outside in the fresh air. Do jumping jacks, run, or have a good laugh. Exercising and deep breathing brings oxygen to your child's brain and reduces stress.
- Stay positive about and during homework. Children listen and internalize negative statements and movements. A positive hopeful attitude is contagious. If you believe they can do it...they will believe they can do it.
- Help your child understand directions, organize, and create a time management plan. Many children waste time by doing the homework incorrectly because they did not understand the directions. Going over them ahead of time saves time and frustration. Don't forget your teen. They have more on their plate and could use your guidance and experience.
- Ask your children what type of music helps them to feel more relaxed when they work. Allow them to find what works for them. *Indigo Dreams: Kid's Relaxation Music* was created specifically for children. It is relaxing and uplifting. Some children need complete quiet and some do better with background noise. Let them learn what works best for them and honor it.



## From the Desk of the Elementary Principal

Dear Parents,

Time sure flies! April is already upon us and there are fewer than two months left in the 2015-16 school year. Throughout the year, it has been enjoyable to continue getting to know the students and families. As I look back, Blair-Taylor Elementary has made some big changes this year, including:

### **Implementation of PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports)**

This initiative has taught all of our students the expected behaviors in all environments at school. Overall, PBIS has been very successful at Blair-Taylor, but there are still areas of concern. We will continue to focus on those areas and make needed improvement through communication with the students involved and their parents. The key to having Blair-Taylor Elementary become the absolute best elementary in the area is through parental support regarding behavior. Our job as a school and parental community is to celebrate student success when appropriate, and to have tough discussions and hold our students accountable, when appropriate—with consequences. We are all on the same team with the best interest of every child in mind.

### **Implementation of PAWS (Personalized Academic Work Study)**

This program has been a huge success. Students are assigned to either an intervention or enrichment for thirty minutes each day during three cycles throughout the school year. Academic data shows that PAWS is having a positive impact on academic success at Blair-Taylor Elementary. We will continue with PAWS in future years and continue to get better and make academic gains.

As a school, we will continue to make the needed changes in order to maximize student success at Blair-Taylor Elementary.

### **Upcoming Events**

- April 12th--4th Grade Heritage Fair
- June 1st--Kindergarten Graduation

Respectfully,

Lynn Halverson  
Elementary Principal

## **Wisconsin Forward Exam**

Beginning in the spring of 2016, Wisconsin students in grades 3 through 8 will take the Forward Exam. The new custom assessment will be administered in English language arts and mathematics in grades 3 through 8, in science in grades 4 and 8, and in social studies in 4, 8, and 10. High school students in grades 9 through 11 will continue to take the ACT suite of exams.

The Wisconsin Forward Exam has replaced the previous test known as the Badger Exam. The test window for the Wisconsin Forward Exam is March 28<sup>th</sup>—May 20<sup>th</sup>.

For additional information regarding the Wisconsin Forward Exam, please visit the following link:

<http://dpi.wi.gov/assessment/forward/sample-items>

## Odyssey of the Mind Advances to World Competition



Congratulations to the 5th grade team, coached by Sandy Serum and Kristie Dingeldein. They will be attending the World Finals Competition in May at Iowa State University.





## School Counseling News

Hilary Walters, 7-12 Counselor  
989-2525, ext. 204; [walteh@btsd.k12.wi.us](mailto:walteh@btsd.k12.wi.us)

### Senior Exit Interviews

All seniors graduating this May will participate in a senior exit interview, showcasing their portfolio and sharing their high school experience. We are looking for 10-15 local business professionals and/or community members to sit in on the interviews. Parents are also welcome to listen as their children present their portfolios. The interviews are scheduled for 6:00-9:00pm on Monday, May 2; Tuesday, May 3; and Thursday, May 4. Please contact Hilary Walters, school counselor, if you are interested in participating in this experience.

### Senior Awards Night

Senior Awards Night is scheduled for Sunday, May 22, at 6:30pm in the high school commons and auditorium. Refreshments will be served in the high school commons beginning at 6:00pm. Awards Night is a special night at Blair-Taylor High School. We are amazed each year by the generous contributions our local communities give to assist students in continuing their education. Several non-monetary awards are also presented at this event as well. This is a chance to recognize those who put forth their talents in the classroom and in other activities. Seniors should notify Mrs. Walters of any awards, scholarships, or grants they have received no later than May 16th if they want them to be recognized at the banquet.

### Scholarships

Seniors are encouraged to check the school website (<http://www.cms4schools.com/btsd/high/scholarships.cfm>) for up-to-date scholarship information. **NEVER** pay for a scholarship search!!

### Compass Testing

COMPASS Testing is available at the following locations, call to make an appointment:

#### LA CROSSE

400 Seventh Street North, Academic Resource Center, Room 200, La Crosse, WI 54602; 608.785.9566

Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri., 9:00 am ~ Tues., Wed., Thurs., 1:00 pm ~ Wed., 3:30 pm

#### INDEPENDENCE

36084 Walnut Street, Independence, WI 54747 715.985.3392

1st Thursday of the month, 1:00 pm  
3rd Monday of the month, 6:00 pm

### BLACK RIVER FALLS

24 Fillmore Street, Black River Falls, WI 54615 715.284.2253

1st Thursday of the month, 5-8 pm  
3rd Thursday of the month, 9-12 pm

Practice Compass can be found at:

[www.compasstestquestions.com](http://www.compasstestquestions.com)

[www.act.org/compass/sample](http://www.act.org/compass/sample)

### 2015-16 ACT Schedule

Test Date	Registration Deadline \$39.50	(Late Registration) + \$25.00
June 11, 2016	May 6, 2016	May 7-20, 2016

### 2016-17 ACT Schedule

Test Date	Registration Deadline	(Late Registration) + fee
September 10, 2016	August 5, 2016	August 6-19, 2016
October 22, 2016	September 16, 2016	September 17-30, 2016
December 10, 2016	November 4, 2016	November 5-18, 2016
February 11, 2017	January 13, 2017	January 14-20, 2017
April 8, 2017	March 3, 2017	March 4-17, 2017
June 10, 2017	May 5, 2017	May 6-19, 2017

Students need to login to [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) to register for the ACT. Students planning to apply to Marquette or University of Minnesota-Twin Cities will need to take the writing portion of the ACT as well. Students applying out of state are encouraged to check with admissions guidelines of their particular colleges. Free ACT Prep is available to:

[www.number2.com](http://www.number2.com) [www.knowhow2gowisconsin.org](http://www.knowhow2gowisconsin.org)  
[www.march2success.com](http://www.march2success.com)

\*\*Students who participate in the free and reduced lunch program are encouraged to see Mrs. Walters for a fee waiver for the ACT and Compass.





## School Counseling News

Hilary Walters, 7-12 Counselor  
989-2525, ext. 204; [walteh@btsd.k12.wi.us](mailto:walteh@btsd.k12.wi.us)

### **Big Cats Little Cats**

We have had an amazing launch of the Big Cats Little Cats mentoring program this year. The Big Cats Little Cats program has matched caring, responsible high school aged students with elementary students who are looking for a friend and positive role model. They meet twice a month to play a game, talk, or participate in program activities such as a winter scavenger hunt and karaoke. We are currently accepting applications for Big Cats for the 2016-17 school year. Applications can be picked up in the 7-12 office or the counseling office. Community members wishing to donate to this program can do so in the form of board games, recreational items (footballs, basketballs, etc.), coloring books/crayons, or monetary donations for group celebrations. Donations can be brought to the Elem. or HS counseling offices. Any donations are greatly appreciated.

### **Wellness Day**

On Tuesday, May 10, the 7-12 grade students will be participating in a wellness day. The day will be filled with a variety of activities aimed at promoting a healthy lifestyle, producing both physical and emotional benefits. The goal of the day is to introduce students to different activities that may lead to lifetime habits. Sample activities include: hiking, pet therapy, biking, yoga, reading, healthy snacks, and fishing.

On the evening of May 10, Blair-Taylor will be coordinating a community wellness event in conjunction with NAMI Trempealeau County. Over 40 tables are planned, with a wide variety of information for families in the community and lots of great activities for kids to participate in. Make sure you mark your calendars so you don't miss this wonderful event!

### **Blood Drive**

The Blair-Taylor School District will be hosting a blood drive on Friday, May 13, from 9:30am-2:30pm in the 7-12 gymnasium. Please call the high school office to arrange a time to donate. Walk-ins are also welcome the day of the drive.

## Great Rainy Day Activities for Kids

by Harvey Mcewan

It can be challenging to come up with ideas for entertaining the kids when the weather is cold, miserable, and wet. In a way, this limits your possibilities, considering you cannot spend a lot of time outdoors; however, do not fret, as there is plenty that can be done indoors too.

This selection of rainy day activities will suit a range of interests, whether your little ones prefer maths or baking.

### **Kitchen Fun**

Use the opportunity to introduce your kids to cooking. Pick out some simple recipes that you know they will like. Some cakes are very easy to make and are bound to be a hit. Pasta sauces and pizzas are also great to make with younger members of the family.

If the kids are young, you will obviously need to take care that they do not handle any sharp knives or piping hot food and liquids. So, if making pizza, for example, put them to work tearing mozzarella cheese with their hands or washing vegetables before you chop them.

Introducing kids to cooking at a young age is important as this increases the likelihood of them enjoying cuisine later on in life, and teaches them how to be independent.

### **Playwriting and Production**

Playwriting and producing a play are a great way to while away time on the weekend. Try to come up with an interesting story that the kids will enjoy performing. If struggling for inspiration, base your play on a book or a TV show.

Let the children assemble a stage and decorate it with soft furnishings and other household goods. If possible, let them raid your closet for costumes too. Make up can be very exciting for kids if you are willing to let them use some or apply some yourself.

Tell the children to practice on their own and tell you when they're ready to perform. Perhaps you could invite some neighbors to join you in the audience?

### **Maths and Science Activities**

It is worth spending time productively when indoors. Avoid switching on the TV and letting your kids stare at the screen for hours on end. Why not use the time to boost your kids' skills and knowledge in maths and science?

There are plenty of science experiments and math puzzles that do not require advance preparation but are still very educational. Many of these can be carried out with the help of just a few commonly found household items, such as tennis balls, string, paper and pens, and dice.

Harvey McEwan writes on a vast range of subjects from family holiday destinations to math puzzles for a rainy day. Read his articles online.

Article Source:

<http://www.articlebiz.com/article/1051608712-1-great-rainy-day-activities-for-kids>



Don't be a party to teenage drinking.

The Department of Health Services has partnered with Drug Free Action Alliance to sponsor Parents Who Host, Lose The Most, a campaign to educate communities and parents about the health and safety risks of serving alcohol at teen parties.

Adults can be criminally prosecuted for hosting teen alcohol parties and be liable for injuries and property damage that may result from providing alcohol to teens.

There are currently more than 60 coalitions participating.

Drug Free Action Alliance developed the Parents Who Host, Lose The Most campaign to encourage everyone, especially parents, to send a unified message that teen alcohol consumption is unhealthy, unsafe, and unacceptable.

#### **April is Teen Alcohol Use and Abuse Awareness Month**

According to the [Wisconsin Epidemiological Profile on Alcohol and Other Drug Use, 2014](#), Wisconsin's rate of drinking among high school students has decreased since 2003, but there is further work to be done. Preventing underage drinking is a priority for the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. In recognition of the health and social costs of underage drinking, Governor Walker has proclaimed April, 2016, as [Teen Alcohol Use and Abuse Awareness Month](#) (PDF, 388 KB). Adults play a big role in shaping young people's attitudes toward drinking.

#### **Underage drinking is hazardous to health and safety.**

According to the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(link is external\)](#), children who drink alcohol are more likely to:

- Use drugs: Frequent binge drinkers are more likely to engage in risky behaviors, including using other drugs such as marijuana and cocaine.
- Get bad grades: Children who use alcohol have higher rates of academic problems and poor school performance compared with nondrinkers.
- Suffer injury or death: In 2009, across the U.S., an estimated 1,844 homicides; 949,000 nonfatal violent crimes such as rape, robbery, and assault; 1,811,300 property crimes, including burglary, larceny, and car theft were attributable to underage drinking.
- Make bad decisions: Drinking lowers inhibitions and increases the chances that children will engage in risky behaviors or do something they will regret when they are sober.
- Have health problems: Young people who drink are more likely to have health issues such as depression and anxiety disorders.

#### **Tips to avoid being a party to teenage drinking**

- Don't be afraid to be the bad guy. Taking a tough stand on alcohol use can help youth say no when they are pressured to drink by their friends.
- Talk with other adults about hosting alcohol-free youth events. Unity creates a tough, enforceable message.
- Set a positive example. If you host a party, always serve alternative non-alcoholic beverages and do not let anyone drink and drive.
- Stay home if a teen is hosting a party in your home. Observe the activities and confiscate any alcohol that may be brought by partygoers.
- Report underage drinking to the police promptly.

In Wisconsin, the Parents Who Host, Lose The Most campaign takes place annually from April through June, covering the prom and graduation seasons for high school students. Local coalitions apply to be part of the campaign. For more information about how to bring this campaign to your community, please contact [Christine Niemuth](#) at 608-261-7655.

Source: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/aoda/pwhltmindex.htm>

## Upcoming Events: May-July, 2016

Check the district website for updates!

Sun., May 1	12:00 AM - 06:00 AM: Post Prom
Mon., May 2	JV TR @ MM 4:30 7:45 AM - 12:00 PM: Spring Concert Rehearsals
Tues., May 3	BB @ Indee 5pm SB @ Indee 5pm TR @ Fall Creek 4pm 7:45 AM - 12:00 PM: Spring Concert Rehearsals
Wed., May 4	7:45 AM - 12:00 PM: Spring Concert Rehearsals 7:00 PM - 09:00 PM: Adult Basketball
Thurs., May 5	TR @ WHTL 5pm 7:45 AM - 12:00 PM: Spring Concert Rehearsals
Fri., May 6	No School In-Service Day 7:45 AM - 12:00 PM: Spring Concert Rehearsals
Sat., May 7	State Solo/Ensemble @ UWEC TR @ CFC 10am
Sun., May 8	2:00 PM - 04:00 PM: 9th Grade Girls Basketball
Mon., May 9	HS Spring Concert 7:30 7:45 AM - 12:00 PM: Spring Concert Rehearsals 5:00 PM - 07:30 PM: HS Spring Concert Warm-Up
Tues., May 10	BB Home vs Augusta 5pm SB Home vs Augusta 5pm 7:45 AM - 12:00 PM: Spring Concert Rehearsals
Wed., May 11	7:45 AM - 12:00 PM: Spring Concert Rehearsals 7:00 PM - 09:00 PM: Adult Basketball
Thurs., May 12	TR Home Conf. Meet 4pm 7:45 AM - 12:00 PM: Spring Concert Rehearsals
Fri., May 13	BB @ ACLH 5pm SB @ ACLH 5pm 7:45 AM - 12:00 PM: Spring Concert Rehearsals 8:00 AM - 03:00 PM: Blood Drive
Sat., May 14	Jazz Concert 7pm
Sun., May 15	2:00 PM - 4:00 PM: 9th Grade Girls Basketball
Mon., May 16	JVTR @ CFC 5pm 7:45 AM - 12:00 PM: Spring Concert Rehearsals 5:30 PM - 8:00 PM: School Board Meeting
Tues., May 17	5-8 Spring Concert 7:30 BB Home vs MM 5pm SB Home vs MM 5pm 7:45 AM - 12:00 PM: Spring Concert Rehearsals 5:00 PM - 7:30 PM: MS Spring Concert Warm-Up 7:30 PM - 9:30 PM: MS Spring Concert
Wed., May 18	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM: Adult Basketball
Thurs., May 19	BB Home vs OF 5pm SB home vs OF 5pm TR @ WHTL 4pm
Fri., May 20	SB Home vs Greenwood 5pm
Sat., May 21	SB Tourney @ Neillsville 10:30
Sun., May 22	5:30 PM - 6:00 PM: Baccalaureate 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM: SR Awards Night
Mon., May 23	TR Regional @ CFC 4pm BB @ ECI 5pm
Tues., May 24	BB Home vs ES 5pm SB Home vs ES 5pm

Wed., May 25	SB Regional 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM: Adult Basketball
Thurs., May 26	TR Sectional
Fri., May 27	SB Regional
Sat., May 28	1:00 PM - 3:00 PM: High School Graduation
Mon., May 30	Memorial Day No School
Tues., May 31	BB Regional SB Sectional
Wed., June 1	6:00 PM - 8:00 PM: 9th Grade Girls Basketball
Thurs., June 2	BB Regional SB Sectional
Fri., June 3	Students' Last Day TR State @ UW-L
Sat., June 4	TR State @ UW-L
Tues., June 7	BB Sectional 8:00 AM - 11:30 AM: Football Contact Days
Wed., June 8	6:00 PM - 8:00 PM: 9th Grade Girls Basketball
Thurs., June 9	SB State
Mon., June 13	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM: MS-HS Summer School
Tues., June 14	BB State 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM: MS-HS Summer School
Wed., June 15	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM: MS-HS Summer School 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM: 9th Grade Girls Basketball
Thurs., June 16	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM: MS-HS Summer School
Fri., June 17	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM: MS-HS Summer School
Mon., June 20	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM: MS-HS Summer School 5:30 PM - 8:00 PM: School Board Meeting
Tues., June 21	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM: MS-HS Summer School
Wed., June 22	8:00 AM - 4:00 PM: Volleyball camp 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM: MS-HS Summer School 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM: 9th Grade Girls Basketball
Thurs., June 23	8:00 AM - 4:00 PM: Volleyball camp 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM: MS-HS Summer School
Fri., June 24	8:00 AM - 4:00 PM: Volleyball camp 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM: MS-HS Summer School
Sat., June 25	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM: Coulee Classic
Wed., July 6	6:00 PM - 8:00 PM: 9th Grade Girls Basketball
Wed., July 13	6:00 PM - 8:00 PM: 9th Grade Girls Basketball
Mon., July 18	5:00 PM - 9:30 PM: Football Camp/Contact Days
Tues., July 19	5:00 PM - 9:30 PM: Football Camp/Contact Days
Wed., July 20	5:00 PM - 9:30 PM: Football Camp/Contact Days
Thurs., July 21	5:00 PM - 9:30 PM: Football Camp/Contact Days

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