

# The Patriot Promoter

Distributed by the Win-E-Mac School District

www.wemschools.org

December 2024



## General Information

- Please take a moment to read through our winter newsletter. Superintendent Cook, Principal Reiersen, and Dean of Students/Activities Director Langemo have provided information for the newsletter.
- Make sure to follow all the most up to date information with the school by viewing the school website and following social media accounts.
- If you have not been receiving weather announcements or early out announcements, please make sure to contact the school office to ensure we have your correct information in the school system.
- We hope all of our students and families have a great holiday season! It has been a fantastic first part of the school year



Click here for the full school Calendar -

## [2024-2025 School Calendar](#)

### **December**

23<sup>rd</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> – No School: Winter Break

### **January**

1<sup>st</sup> – No School :Winter Break

2<sup>nd</sup> – Return from Winter Break

14<sup>th</sup> – Early out at 1:20 pm

17<sup>th</sup> – End of 1st Semester

20<sup>th</sup> – No School: Staff Development

### **February**

17<sup>th</sup> – No School: President's Day

20<sup>th</sup> – Parent/Teacher Conferences

Dismissal 12:30

### **March**

21<sup>st</sup> – End of 3rd Quarter

### **April**

17<sup>th</sup> – Early Out at 12:30

18<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> – No School: Spring Break

### **May**

23<sup>rd</sup> – End of 4th Quarter

24<sup>th</sup> – Graduation

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S NOTES**

**Aaron Cook**



### **New School Board Members**

We would like to welcome Nicki Carlson and Amanda Schow to the school board. Their terms will officially begin the first Monday in January.

We would also like to extend a thank you to Jim Ferden and Sarah Strom for their years of service on the school board. Jim began serving on the board in January of 2009 and Sarah began in January of 2017.

### **Pay 25 Levy & Budget Update**

The 2024 pay 2025 truth in taxation meeting is on Tuesday December 17 at 6:00 in the boardroom. The pay 25 levy has an increase of 4.19% over the pay 24 levy. The majority of the increase comes from two areas. The first is an increase in referendum levies and local optional revenues due to higher student counts used in the levy calculation than the previous year. The second is there is no negative adjustment in lease levy funds on the pay 25 levy, but there was a large negative adjustment on the pay 24 levy.

At our Truth in Taxation meeting we also provide a budget update. The reason we do this in December is we have a much better idea of our students count and staffing levels than we do in June when we have to have an original budget approved.

The original 2024-2025 budget showed a general fund deficit of \$419,794. The revised budget is currently projecting a deficit of \$320,671. Higher student counts than originally anticipated and some reductions in expenses account for the majority of the difference from the original budget.

The final audited data for 2023-2024 showed the district having a loss of \$184,659 in the general fund.

While the district can sustain a loss over a two year period, there will be discussions on a long term plan to stabilize the budget.

### **E-Learning Plans**

The school district does have an approved E-learning plan in place. A copy of the plan is located on the district website and can be accessed here -

[Win-E-Mac E -Learning Day Plan](#)

State statute allows for up to five E-learning days to be used per school year. The full state statute on E-learning can be found here -

<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/120A.414>

### **Legislative Forecast**

Last week the Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) released its forecasted budget over the next biennium, or two year period. In the November forecast there is projected to be a \$616 million balance at the end of the FY26-27 biennium. This is \$1.1 billion less than prior estimates. The long range forecast for the next biennium, or tails budget, for FY 28-29 shows a deficit ranging from \$3.5 billion to \$5.1 billion. MMB will release another forecast in February, and this forecast will drive the two year state budget.

General education funding will be seeing an automatic increase between 2% and 3% due to inflationary increases for fiscal year 2026. School organizations will continue to press the legislature for additional funding for schools, but it does not look promising with the budget forecast.

Additional funding is needed as the increases in general education funding have trailed inflationary increases by 18.7% since 2003. The 2023 and 2024 legislative sessions also put a lot of pressure on schools financially with new mandates and programs that are not fully funded by the legislature.

### **Media Production**

Make sure to follow the Win-E-Mac media productions page on youtube -

<https://www.youtube.com/@Win-E-MacISD>

This year the class has added a segment called WEM in 5. This segment provides a quick update on all this happening within the school.

### **School report Card**

If you ever want to see how a school is doing compared to the state you can view the Minnesota report card.

There is a lot of data that can be viewed on the report card. To access the report for Win-E-Mac please follow this link -

[Win-E-Mac Minnesota Report Card](#)

Erskine: 218-687-2236

McIntosh: 218-563-2900

Fax Line: 218-563-2902

## **PRINCIPAL'S NOTES**

**Casey Reierson**



### **Greetings!**

We have been busy at WEM over the last few months of school. Our school is a fantastic place. Mr. Langemo and I do our absolute best to walk the halls and soak up the joy of our Patriots. I want to once again thank everyone who has welcomed me to WEM. This school is more than just a building—it's a community.

### **Be the Best Patriot**

Some of you may have noticed students wearing *Be the Best Patriot* shirts or stickers. Perhaps you've seen posts about this initiative on our Facebook page. The idea behind this is to encourage our students and staff to be their absolute best at all times—both in school and in the community. We've been recognizing Patriots who go out of their way to make a positive difference. We will continue highlighting these students and are planning an event at the end of the school year to celebrate all our recipients. A special thank you goes out to the Erskine Legion for their support and generous donation to this cause..

### **READ Act and Careiall**

You've likely noticed our early dismissals on Tuesdays. This time has been dedicated to training for our PreK-5 teachers and staff who teach reading. To comply with state requirements, this training is essential. Although it has been a significant undertaking, I am incredibly proud of our WEM staff for their dedication to learning and delivering the best possible instruction to our students. As we near the end of our Careiall training, I can guarantee that the celebration won't just be for our teachers!

### **Reading Curriculum Update**

Our reading curriculum is currently under review as we explore new options to help our students continue excelling on state-mandated tests. We've sent teachers to surrounding schools to collaborate with other educators about their curriculums. Our goal is to ensure we provide the best resources possible to our students, and the reading curriculum committee shares this aspiration.

### **After-School Detention**

If you've read my previous communications, you know that I prioritize being present in the halls, classrooms, lunchrooms, gyms, and other spaces. To support this goal, we strive to minimize office referrals for in-school suspension (ISS). While ISS remains an option, we've also implemented after-school detention as a disciplinary measure. Students assigned to after-school detention stay from 3:15 to 4:15 p.m.

### **Lost and Found**

Our lost-and-found collection grew significantly this fall and early winter. To reduce disruptions in the mornings, we've limited hallway traffic so our teaching staff can prepare for the day with minimal interruptions. Moving forward, we will continue this effort but allow students to drop off their backpacks and change into gym shoes upon arrival.

### **Winter Break**

I hope everyone stays safe and enjoys their winter break. Spend time with family and friends, and let your children recharge for the second semester. It's hard to believe the first semester is already nearing its end, with the last day on January 17th.

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at [creierson@wemschools.org](mailto:creierson@wemschools.org) or call 218-563-2900 if you have any questions or concerns.

Warm regards,  
Principal Casey Reierson

## DEAN OF STUDENT/AD NOTES



**Brady Langemo**

It has been a busy few months for students at Win-E-Mac. Although we are not one of the biggest schools around, we are very proud of the large range in activities and athletics we can provide for our students.

### **Robotics**

Our robotics program currently has twenty-one 8th-12th graders participating in VEX VRC and sixteen 6th-8th graders in VEX IQ. We have also competed in two different Aerial Drone competitions, bringing three teams each time. On 12/11 at the Drone competition at Lincoln High School in Thief River Falls team 5300V (Liam Schow, Mya Strom, & Corbin Moran) won the Coding Award.

### **Knowledge Bowl**

This year Ann Vesledahl & Jessica Strom will be coaching our high school knowledge bowl teams and Brad Hubred will be in charge of the junior high. Currently there are twenty 9th-12th graders attending knowledge bowl practices. Competitions will start in January for this bunch. And we look to have eighteen 7th-9th graders that will participate in the junior high season starting in February.

### **Drama Club**

Mr. Hanson has been very busy in the theater department already this fall and now moving into the winter. We had a wonderful cast of 7th-9th graders perform *Good Cop...Bad Cop*. They did very well in this comedy and we have seen great growth in our junior high actors over the past two years since Mr. Hanson has been able to bring the junior high play back. We are thankful to have this program for them to develop in so they are prepared

to represent us at the One Act Play competitions when they are older. Speaking of, the OAP cast has already started rehearsals for this year's play titled *The Bear*.

### **Esports**

This is our second year offering esports and we have ten students participating. Most esports competitions and practices occur at home after school hours, but due to some rescheduling conflicts we will actually be hosting a *Rocket League* competition vs. WAO in the WEM Arts & events center on 12/17 at 4:30.

### **Music Department**

Earlier this fall we took some of our most talented and dedicated junior high band and choir students to the Mahnomen for the day where they practiced with other band and choir students from the surrounding areas during the day and then put on a public performance that evening. It was truly impressive what they were able to accomplish in just one day of rehearsing.

9th-12th grade students interested in participating in solo and ensemble contests have also already started working with Mrs. Shultz and Miss Salmonson for those upcoming competitions.

### **Leadership Opportunities**

In the past month we have been able to take two different groups of Win-E-Mac high schools to leadership conferences. Five sophomores attended the *Team Up* conference featuring Craig Hillier who is a very motivating and engaging speaker that discusses leadership, the struggles it can cause, but also the opportunities and growth it can bring about. I also took twelve students from grades 9-12 to a leadership conference put on by the MSHSL. This conference provided multiple speakers whose topics ranged from pressures and stresses of high school life to planning for your post secondary education and financial planning. Besides these two conferences I have also been meeting with the captains of our sports teams during their seasons to talk about struggles they might be having as leaders and also working to help them develop their leadership skills. Thanks to Thrivent Financial & The First National Bank of McIntosh for sponsoring my captains meetings, and allowing me to feed these kids.