

The Patriot Promoter

Distributed by the Win-E-Mac School District

www.wemschools.org

December 2025



General Information

- Please take a moment to read through our winter newsletter. Superintendent Cook, Principal Dugstad, 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 early out announcements, please make sure to contact the school office to ensure we have your correct information in the school system. This is the same system we will be using to send out weather related announcements.
- 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 -

[2025-2026 School Calendar](#)

December

23rd – Early out at 12:30

24th-31st – No School: Winter Break

January

1st-2nd – No School: Winter Break

5th - Return from Winter Break

16th - End of 1st Semester

19th - No School, Staff Development

February

16th - No School

19th - Early Out at 12:30, Parent Teacher Conferences

March

20th - End of 3rd Quarter

April

3rd & 6th - Spring Break

May

22nd - Final day of School

23rd - Graduation 2:00

SUPERINTENDENT'S NOTES

Aaron Cook, Superintendent



Referendum & Budget Update

The school would like to thank our community members who took the time to vote in the recent operating referendum. Your support is appreciated and makes a lasting difference for our students, staff and programs.

The referendum will begin providing funding in FY27, tax year 2026. While this is great news for our long term stability, there are still going to be budget challenges for FY26 as it is projected to be negative.

In future years we are hopeful to balance the budget while keeping similar staffing levels thanks to the referendum. The district also needs to invest in building maintenance, school security, and transportation needs as many of these things have been postponed due to budgetary constraints in recent years.

We are grateful for the trust our community has put into our school and we remain committed to responsible spending with taxpayer dollars. Thank you for investing in the future of Win-E-Mac

Truth in Taxation Meeting

If you were unable to attend the truth in taxation meeting and would like a copy of the presentation or have any questions please feel free to reach out to me.

State Budget Forecast

Minnesota's budget and economic outlook remains stable in the current biennium; however, structural budget challenges remain. A better-than-expected fiscal year close and higher near-term revenue collections, partially offset by increased spending estimates, result in a projected surplus of \$2.465 billion in the current biennium. Higher health care costs and slow economic growth drive an increased structural imbalance in the FY 2028-29 planning estimates where the balance is now projected to be negative \$2.960 billion. Total general fund reserves remain strong and at their statutory target of \$3.771 billion.

School leaders and organizations will continue to advocate for public school support at the state legislature. There have been laws enacted in recent years that have put added financial and academic pressures on schools, without the needed financial supports.

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>

Student Productions

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

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

and also visit the school site for the monthly production of the Patriot Press -

<https://wemschools.org/press>

for updates and information on events taking place within the school

Comprehensive and Civic Readiness

The World's Best Workforce (WBWF) was developed in 2013 ([Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 120B.11](#)) to ensure that school districts and charter schools in Minnesota enhance student achievement through teaching and learning supports. During the 2024 session, the Minnesota Legislature renamed WBWF to Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness (CACR). This change took effect as of the 2024-25 school year strategic plans and Fall 2025 annual summary report.

School boards that govern districts and charter schools are required to develop comprehensive, long-term strategic plans that address the following five CACR goals:

- All children are ready for school.
- All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.
- All students are ready for career and college.
- All students graduate from high school.
- All students are prepared to be lifelong learners.

The school board also included the CACR public meeting as part of the truth in taxation meeting.

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](#)

PRINCIPAL'S NOTES

Carl Dugstad



Principal Carl Dugstad

Greetings

Hello! My first half-year or so at Win-E-Mac has been awesome. I have gotten to know the staff and students and I am very humbled to be a part of the team and our community here at WEM. I want to thank you all for trusting us with your students and assure you that we are working as hard as we can to give them the best experience and education possible. Our kids go to school here, too. I would like to especially thank the staff that have made my transition go as smoothly as could be expected. They have so much knowledge of the past and are excited for the future of our school. Thanks as well to the School Board for giving me the opportunity.

Community Education

Community Education has gotten under way with a few meetings. There is adult volleyball and youth sports underway right now. We are also excited to bring some popular classes back for the community. We are looking at offering some classes that have happened in the past or that we have gotten feedback that would be popular. Those class titles/topics will be announced when plans are finalized. One change is that we are going to ask people to pay for classes when they sign up. We are doing this because we value the people that are willing to come in and teach a class. We want them to be sure that when they come to WEM-a full class will be there to greet them. If they take time out of their evening to come share with the community they deserve to have an audience.

Data Update

One of the most important parts of a school is data. We have access to so much data that we also need to be able to focus not only on what data we have but what data we *want* to collect and use. We are using Fastbridge this year as a screening tool to help us know what skill levels our students are at. We are also working in teams to decide which data are the most important to us and what we want to focus the majority of our effort on. We are screening in reading and have started some math screening as well so we can provide data-driven instruction formed by the actual students in each

classroom. Data can be intimidating but we are dedicated to using it to help our Patriots.

MNMTSS

You may hear about MNMTSS in and around schools in the state of Minnesota. I just want to outline what MNMTSS is and how it might help or change the status quo at WEM. MNMTSS is a systemic shift in how students are screened and how they gain access to additional services they need. You may have heard of ADSIS-where our students get help with the specific skills that our data says they need. It is a fantastic and effective way to make sure we are doing our best to find struggling students and have a framework for getting them help. MNMTSS refers to a tiered system of how much and how intense the assistance they get at school is. Many students thrive in the general education classroom, some need help with reading, math, etc., and some need more help yet. We are using MNMTSS to determine how our system responds to the data we are getting from our students. We still have the same awesome people helping our awesome students but there may be some slight shifts here and there.

Safe and Secure Schools

I would like to make a slight change to how things go at our school in hopes to make our building more secure. Parents are still invited to bring their young children down to the early grades in the morning before they head to work, etc. I would ask , and we will now expect, that parents remain in the commons after school. We have a system in place where each class is brought down by their teacher in a specific order. The doors will be unlocked at 2:55PM daily for parents to come in and wait. Please wait in the commons instead of walking down our hallways to your child's classroom. We would like to have our students and staff be the only people in the hallways and classrooms while school is in session. Thanks for your understanding of this change.

Cell Phones

Just a friendly reminder that we expect zero phones out during school for grades PK-8. We are going to be taking the phones that are out and after the first few offenses parents will be expected to come in and get them. We don't do this because we want to be the phone police-we do this because students are here to learn and socialize and snapchat, video games, social media can cause so many problems for students, especially our younger Patriots. We want to help them navigate their school day (which is already a lot of work) without all the distraction and negativity that cell phones can bring into their day. Please remind your students and back us up.

DEAN OF STUDENT/AD NOTES



Mr. Langemo

It has been a busy first few months here at Win-E-Mac. I would like to express my thanks to the students, staff, and community for helping get this year off to a great start. I would also like to take this opportunity to highlight some of the activities, groups, and opportunities we have going on here Win-E-Mac.

Kindness Club

Many of our 6th grade students have been working under the direction of Mr. Hubred to start the Kindness Club. Recently they have had a table in the cafeteria during lunch time where staff and students can stop by and fill out a *kindness gram* for a fellow student or staff member. You can either sign your name or send them anonymously to show someone you appreciate what they do for you or for the school. The Kindness Club also has *blue ribbons* for students or staff to take to promote that initiative which Mr. Hubred brought to Win-E-Mac last year. Thank you to the students and to Mr. Hubred for doing your part to promote all the positives going on here.

Attendance

It is vitally important to the education of our students that they attend school regularly and on time. Students need to be in class before the second bell each hour or they will be marked tardy. This includes the 8:25 am first hour bell. If students are more than 15 minutes late to a class period, it is marked as an absence. Students involved in extra-curriculars are also expected to be to school on time the morning after an event. Instead of focusing on consequences of absences and tardies, we are trying to explain the importance of being on time both for academic performance and teaching responsibility and reliability that will help them as adults.

Sports

The overall participation numbers for both our fall sports (football, volleyball, football cheerleading) and our winter sports (boys & girls basketball, wrestling, boys basketball cheer) are up from last year. We are excited that so many of our students want to dedicate themselves

to improving physically and to improve their teamwork & cooperation skills. Many of our games can be viewed on Garden Valley local channel #30, but we also hope that our loyal followers will attend some games in person. Having a packed gymnasium or bleachers helps create an environment of pride and support that will hopefully both improve our student athletes' performance and create community unity and pride.

Activities

Besides sports, we have many extra-curricular and co-curricular activities to offer here at WEM with all but the All-School Play already up and running. These activities include Riverwatch, Knowledge Bowl, Yearbook, Junior High Play, One Act Play, E-Sports, Robotics, and Student Council.

I encourage all students at Win-E-Mac to find some sport or activity to join. Research has shown that students who participate in extracurriculars have significantly better attendance, score higher on math & reading tests, and also are more likely to carry a GPA above 3.0. Being involved also creates a higher level of school pride, which creates a more positive school experience and climate.

We would not be able to offer all the sports and activities we do if it were not for the staff members and community members willing to put in the time and effort to provide our students with the opportunities to learn and grow. Thank you to all who help, and if anyone is interested in being an advisor, coach, or volunteer, please reach out to me.

Sponsorship

This summer we rolled out a few sponsorship opportunities for both individuals and businesses. Thanks to those who have already made the investment to advertise with us and show support for our students and school. Please reach out for more information.

Here is a quick overview of some options:

-Stadium Seats: These were available to sponsor for \$75. Each seat includes the Patriot logo as well as your business logo, name, or personal message on the back. These are free for all fans to use during home games.

We are no longer taking orders for these, but might open it up again over the summer.

-Video Scoreboard Ads: Your business can advertise either with a rotating banner ad on the bottom of the scoreboard, or also full screen ads during warmups & halftime, as well as ads in the Scorefeed App.

-Softball fence signs: Your business can advertise on a 4' x 8' sign to be hung on the outfield fence of the softball fields. Our first set of signs are being ordered soon.