August/September 2026

Trailhead Learning Center

Melanie Ryken, Principal
www.ysd.k12.sd.us
605-260-5400

Emergency Cards

Emergency Cards need to be filled out and returned to school as soon as possible. These are kept on file in case we need to reach you in an emergency or if your child becomes ill during the school day. If information changes, please notify the office of new information, so we can have correct information in case there is a need to reach you. Thank you!

Bus Students

Rural JrK-K grade students can ride the bus to and from school. Rural PM Preschoolers are allowed to ride the bus home in the afternoon. The bus unloads and picks up on the east side of the building.

After school, a supervisor will walk rural and Academy students to the bus. The students will then go to YMS (rural) and ride their bus home or to Stewart (Academy) for after school care.

Students are NOT allowed to ride the bus to YMS or Stewart in order to walk home, get picked up or meet siblings.

YSD also has a free in-town AM bus route for JrK/K students. Please consider signing your child up in order to help them get to school safely and on time.

Contact the office for more details, as students need to be registered prior to riding.

Welcome to Trailhead Learning Center (TLC)

We are excited to welcome all of our students and families to Trailhead Learning Center. We feel honored to have your child in our state-of-the-art facility. Many of you were with us last year with your child(ren), so we are happy to welcome you back. If you are new to Trailhead, we are excited to have you experience the joy of TLC!

Preschool, JrK and K Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Our parking lot is specially designed for a smooth drop-off and pick-up process. Your child's teacher will show a video and fully explain the process at your orientation meeting, so you are more comfortable.

All Preschool students will be walked to their door (marked PRESCHOOL) at the beginning of their day, so parents will park in the lot and walk them safely to their teacher. The same will happen for pick up after preschool. *The left lane is for preschool parents, so please stay in that lane until leaving the campus. Switching to the right lane is not allowed and only for JrK/K parents.*

All JrK/K students will be dropped in the drop-off zone each morning. After school, parents will form a line in the right lane for pick-up and display a poster. *Parking is not allowed in the right lane until 2:30 PM.* Parents will receive 3 posters at orientation, and more can be printed if needed. Students will be called to find the correct color cone (by their parent's vehicle) and load from the passenger side. *Parents will remain in their vehicle for both drop-off and pick-up while only using the right lane. Switching to the left lane is not allowed.*

If you have a PM pick-up for a student in Preschool AND JrK/K, you can park in the right lane, walk to get your preschooler and return to your car for your other child.

Breakfast Door

A safe and nutritious option for students coming to school early is breakfast. Students can eat anytime between 7:45-8:20. They should be dropped in the drop-off zone and enter the cafeteria through the playground. The front doors will remain locked all day. There are supervisors outside on the playground beginning at 8:10 every morning.

Birthday Invites

We understand it's easy to pass out birthday invitations at school. We are happy to help your child do that at school; however, in order to avoid hurt feelings we only allow invites to be passed out at school if for the entire class or all boys/girls in the class are invited. This prevents others from being sad or feeling left out if they don't receive one. Thanks for understanding!

Security Vestibule & Entrance

All exterior doors at Trailhead will be locked during the day. When you visit, please push the intercom button outside of the main door (#1), so we can visit and help you in a timely manner.

All Preschool, JrK and K students arriving at school late or returning to school, must be walked into the main door (#1) by an adult, so we can be assured everyone arrives safely. If you are picking your child up early, please let us know in advance, so we can have them prepared. Once you arrive to drop them off late or pick them up early, we will have you sign them in/out on the Chromebook in the office.

Delta Dental

Delta Dental is explained at www.deltadentalsd.com. Please send your check directly to the company. *Do not return any papers to school.* *This is an optional program for your family.*

JrK/K Lunch Program

If you feel your family would qualify for the free or reduced lunch program, there are directions for completing an online application on the district's website. Let us know if you need the link or a paper copy.

TLC will offer two student options for lunch—school hot or school cold lunch. Your child can order either (hot or cold) each morning or bring a cold lunch from home.

If you would like to track your child's balance or make online deposits (for a minimal fee), it's easy! Go to www.myschoolbucks.com and register.

TLC Store

Are you interested in purchasing gear for your family and/or child?

We have an online store set up from Monday, August 10 through Friday, August 28. These orders are through House of Brands and will be available for you to pick up when they are complete (mid September).

This is a great way to advertise your child's new school and allow them the opportunity to be proud of where they are attending!

School Food Pantry

The school food pantry is located at Calvary church. The pantry will be open Tuesday, September 1 from 4:30-6:00 PM.

A variety of food items will be given out for families who need food assistance. Any family who has a student enrolled in Pre-12th grade in the Yankton School District will be eligible for this benefit.

The dates will be posted in our monthly newsletters; however, they are typically on the 1st Tuesday of each month.

If you'd like an activity card for your Kindergarten student, please stop by the office or send $20 to TLC (checks to YSD). This card will allow your child access to most activities throughout the year. Children in Preschool and JrK do not need a ticket for

If your child is involved in an accident at school, first aid will be administered, if appropriate. If severe injuries necessitate the services of a doctor, the child will be taken to the doctor. Parents will be notified before this procedure, if time and circumstances permit.

Boys & Girls Club Academy

The Academy is a great option for JrK and K students who need daycare before and/or after school. All after school Academy (JrK-5th grade) students are transported free of charge from TLC to Stewart. All AM Academy students are also transported free of charge from Stewart to TLC.

Please wait until 3:45 before picking your child up from the Academy due to safety and traffic issues at both locations.

If you are interested in more information, please call 661-7894.

Attendance Policy

Tardiness and Leaving Early

- The tardy bell will ring five minutes after the first bell.
- Students who are not in their classroom when the 2nd bell rings, will be counted tardy.
- Students who leave before class is dismissed will be counted as leaving early.
- Consequences for excessive tardiness or leaving early shall be as follows:

Total of 5-9 = 15 minutes after school each time

Total of 10-14 = 30 minutes after school each time

Total of more than 15 = after school until 4:00 each time and possible referral to the Department of Social Services

Absenteeism

- An absence includes both excused and unexcused absences, but does not include days absent due to short term suspensions, long term suspensions, or expulsions.
- Consequences for excessive absences are as follows:

Level 1: Total of 10 = letter sent home notifying parents and possible referral to the State's Attorney

Level 2: Total of 15 or more = letter sent home notifying parents, referral to the State's Attorney, and options about the child's placement for the academic year and possible grade level retention will be considered

August/September Calendar of Events

August	14:	Preschool, JrK and Kdg Orientation Meetings
	17:	Preschool Orientation
	17 or 18:	1st Day of School for JrK & Kindergarten Students
	18 or 19:	1st Day of School for Preschool Students
	28:	TLC Shirt Store Closes
September	7:	No School—Labor Day
	3:	1st Sack Pack Distribution (if form returned Fri, Aug 29)
	4:	JrK and Kdg School Pictures
	9 or 10:	Pre School Pictures
	25:	YHS Homecoming/Early Dismissal @ 1:30 PM for TLC, no PM Preschool

Alternate Days for JrK/K

Our JrK/K students and parents had an orientation meeting scheduled for Friday, Augst 14. The letter you received specified the time.

There is additional information included in the letter about the first week of school as your child's first week will look a little different. Your child will only attend two days—either Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday. There is no school for anyone on Friday, August 21. The following Monday, Augst 24 is a regular week with all JrK/K students attending school every day.

Smart Devices

If you need to reach your child or your child's teacher during the school day, please feel free to call the office. We will make sure they get the message at an appropriate time without interrupting the classroom. If students have a cell phone, smart watch or smart device, they will be kept safely in their backpack until they are dismissed.

Student Accident Insurance

A Limited Student Accident Insurance Policy may be purchased for enrolled students. The information was sent out in a Connect 5 message. YSD assumes no responsibility or liability for the insurance policy. Payment should be made by check or money order. **Insurance envelopes are to be returned to the school within 10 days if you want the insurance.**



Trail Mix Parent Group

We are anxious to continue with our parent/teacher group at TLC as we had a great start last year. If you interested in being a board member, please give us a call or let your child's teacher know. The time commitment should be minimal with a meeting once a month and a few fun activities planned for the school year. Come join the fun!

Student Illness

Children who are ill (fever, new/worsening cough, shortness of breath, new severe headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, or diarrhea and/or vomiting) should not be sent to school. When your child is absent, please call the school at 260-5400 by 9:00 AM, so we know your child is safe. We will contact you by phone or home visit if we don't hear from you first.

If your child becomes sick at school, we will call you to pick them up. If students are ill with symptoms, they will not be allowed to stay in school. They can return to school if they are symptom free and/or without fever reducing medication for 24 hours.

Please contact the office if you have any questions regarding symptoms. Thank you!

TLC School Times

7:45-8:20	JrK/K Breakfast
8:00-8:30	AM Preschool Begins
8:10	JrK/K Supervisor Outside
8:30	Jr Kindergarten Bell Rings
8:35	Kindergarten Bell Rings
11:00	AM Preschool Dismissed
11:00	Jr Kindergarten Lunch
11:30	Kindergarten Lunch
12:00	Kindergarten Lunch
12:00-12:30	PM Preschool Begins
3:00	PM Preschool Dismissed
3:15	Bus Students Dismissed
3:15	JrK/K Dismissed

School Lunch Program

Breakfast:

Student = $1.80

Lunch:

Student = $2.80

Extra Milk:

White/Chocolate = $.50

Breakfast is an available option for all JrK-Kdg students and is served in the gym. Students can enter the cafeteria door by walking through the playground. The breakfast door unlocks at 7:45.

Students will go outside to play after eating breakfast.

Supervisors are present on the playground beginning at 8:10. The JrK bell rings at 8:30, and the Kdg bell rings at 8:35.

If your child is arriving at school prior to 8:10, we recommend they eat breakfast before going out to play.

Snacks/Treats

Students are allowed to bring in snacks/treats for birthdays if they wish; however, all items must be unopened and store purchased. Home baked goods are not allowed. Feel free to call the office if you have questions about this or need more information. Thank you!

Trailhead Learning Center Staff

Rachel Christensen:	Preschool	Christine Shudak:	Preschool
Sawyer Schmitz:	Preschool	Lydia Wentworth:	Preschool
Taylor Akre	Jr Kindergarten	Melanie Duchscher:	Jr Kindergarten
Jenny Kapla:	Jr Kindergarten	Jenna Pavel:	Jr Kindergarten
Kris Binde	Kindergarten	Laura Drotzmann:	Kindergarten
Kendra Frick:	Kindergarten	Katie Harris	Kindergarten
Gabby Healy:	Kindergarten	Madison Ljunggren:	Kindergarten
Peggy Marquardt:	Kindergarten	Traci Olinger	Kindergarten
Kayla Toupal:	Kindergarten	Lesli Erickson	Title I
Hannah Lotz:	Special Education	Traci Peterson:	Special Education
Kennedy Rosberg:	Special Education	Hannah Zimmerman:	Special Education
Lacey Kindle:	SPED Evaluator	Taya Bult:	Music
Lesley Hale:	Counselor	Theresa Kneifl:	Counselor
Bella Fry, Maddie Henseler, Kaycee Michael, Laura Streff:			Speech Therapy
Megan Hohenthanner:	Occupational Therapy	Pam Fedders:	Physical Therapy
Jamie Tramp:	PE/Tech Integrationist	Rebecca Gravholt:	ELL
Psychologist:	Trina Bottolfson	Psychologist:	Grace Liebig
Deb Enfield:	Cafeteria	Kristi Johnson:	Cafeteria
Kim Kotrous:	Cafeteria	Callie Lotz:	Lunchroom
Randi Kindle:	Nurse	Jana Kinning:	Nurse
Julie Moderegger:	Admin Assistant	Melanie Ryken:	Principal

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

At the beginning of the school year, every district that receives Title I funds, is required to inform parents that they may request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's teachers. If you, as a parent, would like to know if your child's teacher meets South Dakota's state certification requirements, please contact me at 260-5400.