AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2026

West Central Public Schools
Humboldt/Hartford
SD District 49-7

West Central Wire

"To prepare all students for learning and living in a changing world"

~West Central Schools Mission Statement

www.westcentral.k12.sd.us



As we welcome the 2026–2027 school year, we hope everyone enjoyed a relaxing and memorable summer break. Summer provides an important opportunity for students and staff to recharge, reflect, and prepare for the exciting opportunities that come with a new school year. One of the greatest qualities of education is the gift of a fresh start. Each school year brings new beginnings, new goals, and new possibilities for growth and success for both students and staff.

I encourage everyone to embrace this new chapter with optimism, purpose, and determination to make this a truly outstanding year. As we begin this academic journey together, I am excited to share the priorities, initiatives, and updates that will continue to strengthen our schools and enhance the learning experience for all students.

Summer Projects

Throughout the summer months, our custodial and maintenance staff devote countless hours preparing our schools and classrooms for the start of another successful school year. Their hard work, pride, and dedication are evident in every hallway, classroom, and campus space as they work to ensure our facilities are clean, safe, and welcoming for students, staff, and families. The behind-the-scenes efforts of these outstanding team members play a vital role in creating positive learning environments, and we are deeply appreciative of their continued commitment to our schools and community.

This summer, the district completed several significant facility upgrades: Humboldt Elementary: New flooring was installed in the art, music, and intervention classrooms. New flooring was also installed in the library and the lunchroom. Hartford Elementary: The three sets of doors that our students utilize multiple times per day for recess entry and exit have been replaced. These doors had shown a great deal of wear. During our Homeland Security Audit, these doors were identified as a point to address for continued school safety. High School: The high school office was also identified during our safety audit. This summer, this space underwent a complete remodel. This remodel upgrades the safety and usability of our office space. The other major construction project that was undertaken this summer was a new parking lot at the high school. With this project, we were able to expand the parking lot spaces and widen driving passages for safer entry and exit. The other portion of this project that was highly suggested by our Homeland Security was an exterior fence for our middle school and high school campus.

In addition to facility improvements, we are excited to share a major learning resource upgrade. In the middle school, our 6th-8th grade students have previously used iPads as an instructional tool to access their curriculum and learning management system. During the 2026-2027 budgeted technology upgrade cycle, the decision was made to move the middle school into the new MacBook Neo. These computers provide a more powerful device for learning. These also provide a much more reliable device for our students to conduct their learning.

We're proud of the progress made this summer and look forward to an exciting and productive school year ahead.

School Focus

As we begin the 2026–2027 school year, our district remains focused on key priorities that support the growth, achievement, and success of every student. Student learning and achievement continue to be at the heart of our work and serve as the driving force behind our decisions and initiatives. We are committed to providing high-quality instruction, meaningful individualized support, and positive learning environments where all students are encouraged to reach their full potential.

Clear communication is essential to staying informed about your child's school experience. We encourage all families to visit our website, which provides valuable information for students, parents, and the broader community. To make access even more convenient, the website is also available as a mobile app. We highly recommend downloading the app to your phone. By enabling notifications, you'll receive timely updates from the district, including weather alerts, schedule changes, and other important announcements. In addition to the website and app, there are other key tools to help you stay connected. Be sure you have an active login for Infinite Campus. This platform gives you access to your child's attendance, grades, missing assignments, and other essential daily updates. For elementary families, we recommend downloading the ClassDojo app. It is widely used by teachers and school staff to share classroom and school-level updates, reminders, and announcements. If your child participates in extra-curricular or co-curricular activities, download the Band app for key communications. Staying engaged through these platforms will help ensure you have the information you need to support your child's success.

We appreciate the continued partnership of our families, staff, and community as we embark on another year of growth, innovation, and achievement.

Dr. Knight
Superintendent of Schools
West Central School District 49-7

DISTRICT-WIDE NEWS

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WEST CENTRAL SCHOOL BOARD

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Please note: Regular school board meetings are held the second Monday of each month in the Board Room at the Administration Office. Meetings begin promptly at 5:30 p.m. unless otherwise posted. All meetings are open to the public. If a person desires to have an item placed on the agenda, please contact the Administration Office one week prior to the scheduled meeting. All meeting agendas can be located on the West Central webpage under the District Board of Education. All school board proceedings are published in the Minnehaha Messenger.

WEST CENTRAL SCHOOL DIRECTORY

Eric Knight, *Superintendent* *528-3217*
Dr. Andrew Barron, *High School Principal* *528-6236*
Mark Rockafellow, *Middle School Principal* *528-3799*
Amy Larson, *Humboldt Elementary Principal* *363-3131*
Ashley Bahrenfuss, *Hartford Elementary Principal* *528-3215*
Krista Stuessi, *Business Manager* *528-3217*
Andray Knutson, *Director of Special Services* *528-3210*
Carrie Schaefers, *Curriculum Coordinator* *528-3217*
Darren Sindelar, *Activities Director* *528-6236*
Emily Bunkers, *MS/HS Student Success Coordinator* *528-6236*
Makenna Macdonald, *Elementary Student Success Coordinator* *528-3215*
or 363-3131
Chris Waltner, *Director of Technology* *528-3217*
Tanya Thomas-Parsons, *Food Service Director* *528-6238*
Chris Krogmann, *Transportation Supervisor* ***(Bus Garage Office)*** *528-6235*

EARLY DISMISSALS FOR 2026-2027

School will dismiss early for homecoming, teacher work time days, parent/teacher conference, winter break, and the last day of school. School will dismiss at 1:30 pm on the following days:

September 18	**December 18**	**March 12**
October 16	**February 11**	**May 20**

2026-2027 SCHOOL CALENDAR

August 3 ..... District Student Registration Day
New Students 10:00 am - 6:00 pm High School Gym
Returning Students 11:00 am - 7:00 pm High School Gym
August 10-11 ..... New Teacher In-Service
August 12 ..... Freshmen/New Student Orientation 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm
August 12-14 ..... Teacher In-Service
August 17 ..... All Staff In-Service
August 17 ..... Humboldt Elementary Open House 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm
August 17 ..... Hartford Elementary Open House 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm
August 17 ..... Middle School Open House 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm
August 19 ..... 1st Day of School

September 4 ..... NO SCHOOL
September 7 ..... NO SCHOOL – Labor Day
September 18 ..... School Dismissal at 1:30 pm – Homecoming

October 12 ..... NO SCHOOL – Native American Day
October 16 ..... School Dismissal at 1:30 pm, Teacher Work Time, End of 1st Quarter
October 19 ..... NO SCHOOL, Parent-Teacher Conferences 11:00 am - 7:00 pm

November 25-27 ..... NO SCHOOL – Thanksgiving Break

December 18 .. School Dismissal at 1:30 pm, Winter Break Begins, End of 2nd Quarter
December 21-31 ..... NO SCHOOL -- Winter Break

January 1 ..... NO SCHOOL – Winter Break
January 4 ..... NO SCHOOL – Staff Development
January 5 ..... Return from Winter Break
January 18 ..... NO SCHOOL --Teacher In-Service

February 11 ... School Dismissal at 1:30 pm, Parent-Teacher Conferences 2:00 - 9:00 pm
February 12 ..... NO SCHOOL - Comp Day for Teachers
February 15 ..... NO SCHOOL - Presidents Day

March 12 .. School Dismissal at 1:30 pm, Teacher Work Time, End of 3rd Quarter
March 19 ..... NO SCHOOL - Comp Day for Teachers
March 26 ..... NO SCHOOL
March 29 ..... NO SCHOOL

April 16 ..... NO SCHOOL
April 19 ..... NO SCHOOL

May 15 ..... Graduation
May 20 School Dismissal at 1:30 pm, End of 4th Quarter, Last Day for Students
May 21 ..... Last Day for Teachers

Inclement Weather or Make-Up Days: The first five make-up days are built into the school calendar. After five days, each additional day will be made up at the end of the school year.

West Central School events and activities can be located on the website calendar at:

westcentral.mhsoftware.com



SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION



The Campus Messenger System is our primary notification system for parents/guardians and staff. It will be utilized for school closings, delays, or early dismissals. Please call **Caryl Nolz at 528-3217** for changes in phone numbers.

In addition, the following TV stations will be notified in the event that school should be cancelled or dismissed early due to inclement weather conditions:

Television Stations: KELO, KDLT, KSFY

We make every effort to provide this information to families prior to 6:30 a.m. However, the changing weather in South Dakota may make this a challenge on some days. In any case, we will notify these stations as soon as possible.

We care very much about your children and do our best to make appropriate decisions based on student safety and student achievement. Please remember that as a parent or guardian, you have the right to keep your child home on any day that you feel it is unsafe for your student to travel to school due to weather conditions.

NEW STUDENT REGISTRATION

NEW STUDENT REGISTRATION

Registration for new students in the West Central School District is set for Monday, August 3, 2026 at the high school from 10:00am-6:00pm by appointment only

Appointment sign up is available on the district website at: https://www.westcentral49-7.com or by using the following link: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0A4AACAD29A3F49-62645211-newstudent

Parents/Guardians are asked to bring with them their child's certified birth certificate, immunization records, medicaid card (if applicable) and current proof of residency (parent) to complete the registration process. A copy of the certified birth certificate will be made in the office.

Early childhood students and students who attended Kindergarten screening last spring do not need to attend new student registration.

Families not able to attend the registration should contact the school to set up an appointment to register their child(ren). West Central Administration requests that families make contact with the school by August 1st if unable to come to register so that planning for the upcoming school year will include accurate student numbers.

Humboldt Elementary (K-5) 363-3131
Or 528-3325
Hartford Elementary (JK-3) 528-3215
Middle School (6-8) 528-3799
High School 528-6236

If you are unable to reach anyone at the above school numbers, please call the Administration Office at 528-3217.

ASBESTOS HAZARD EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACT

In October 1987, the U.S. Congress passed the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act. Asbestos is a fiber, which in the past had been used in building construction materials, and has been identified as being a disease-causing agent, including a cause of cancer. The purpose of the legislation was to ensure that school students are provided with a safe environment in which to learn. Asbestos abatement (removal) has been completed throughout the district. The only asbestos-containing material that remains in the district is floor coverings at Hartford Elementary. Should any parent/patron have questions regarding the Federal law or its application to our district, those persons are invited to direct any inquiries to Krista Stuessi, Business Manager at 605-528-3217.

GATE RECEIPTS AND ADMISSIONS

The following is a list of admission prices to varsity activities, excluding chorus and band concerts. At all high school concerts, we ask for donations to help benefit the West Central music program.

Adult Patrons of West Central Schools:
$6 per event or $60 for a season pass

Students Attending West Central Schools:
$4 per event or $25 for a season pass

Visiting Coaches and Administration:
Admitted Free

West Central Employees and Their Spouses:
Admitted free by displaying employee badge or complimentary pass
(Passes distributed from Administration Office)

Senior Citizens (65 years and older):
Admitted free

Play and Musicals:
$6 adults - $5 students

NOTICE OF DESTRUCTION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION RECORDS

Special Education records which have been collected by the West Central School District related to the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or the provision of Special Education in the district, must be maintained under state and federal laws for a period of five years after Special Education Services have ended for the student. Special Education services end when the student no longer is eligible for services, graduates, completes his or her educational program on June 30th of the year after he/she turns 21, or moves from the district.

This notification is to inform parents/guardians and former students of the West Central School District's intent to destroy the Special Education records of students who ended special education services prior to or during the 2020-2021

school year. These records will be destroyed in accordance with state laws unless the parent/guardian or eligible (adult) student notifies the school district otherwise. After five years, the records are no longer useful to the district, but they may be useful to the parent/guardian or former student in applying for Social Security benefits, rehabilitation services, college entrance, etc. The parent/guardian or eligible (adult) student may request a copy of the records in writing or in person at the following address:

West Central School District 49-7
Special Services Department
705 E. 2nd Street, PO BOX 730
Hartford, SD 57033
605-528-3217

Requests for copies must be received by September 30, 2026 (30-45 days after letter has been sent or "reasonable amount of time"). These records will be destroyed after 10/01/2026.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT

The Board subscribes to the fullest extent to the principle of the dignity of all people and of their labors and will take action to ensure that applicants are employed, assigned, and promoted without regard to their age, race, creed, color, sex, marital status, political affiliation, or national origin.

Every available opportunity will be taken in order to assure that each applicant for a position is selected on the basis of qualifications, merit and ability.

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

All students of the district will have equal educational opportunities (including career and technical education programs). The Board will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, handicap, sexual orientation, economic status, national origin, ancestry, or other human differences in its policies or programs.

To accomplish this policy of nondiscrimination, the Board will make every effort to provide all students equal access with respect to admission or membership in school-sponsored organizations, clubs, or activities; access to facilities; distribution of funds; academic evaluations; or any other aspect of school-sponsored programs or activities.

The Board recognizes that children vary widely in capabilities, interests, and social and economic background, and that no two children can be treated exactly alike if the fullest development of each is to be achieved.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The West Central School District #49-7 does not discriminate in its employment policies and practices, or in its educational programs (including career and technical education programs) on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, age, sex, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, or other human differences and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Requirement for admission to the Career and Technical Education courses is completion of prerequisite coursework of each area.

Career and Technical Education Pathways offered at the West Central School District

Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources
Architecture and Construction
Arts & Audio Visual
Business
Finance
Hospitality & Tourism
Human Services
Information Technology
Manufacturing
STEM

Inquiries specifically concerning the application of Title VI, Title IX, or section 504 may be referred to:

Title VI (discrimination based on national origin/race)
Special Services Director
Title IX (discrimination based on gender)
Activities Director
Section 504 (discrimination based on disability)
Special Services Director

Both Special Services and Activities Director can be reached at:

West Central School District
705 E. 2nd St.
Hartford, SD 57033
605-528-3217

Or

Kansas City Office
U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
One Petticoat Lane
1010 Walnut St, 3rd Fl. Ste.320
Kansas City, MO 64114-3302
Phone: 816-268-0550
Fax: 816-823-1404; TDD: 877-521-2172
E-mail: OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov

BULLYING; PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

The District is committed to maintaining a constructive, safe, and bullying-free school climate that is conducive to all students' educational opportunities and which fosters an environment in which all students are treated with respect and dignity. Bullying can inhibit a student's educational opportunities and may also have long-term negative effects on a student. Bullying of students shall not be tolerated and is strictly prohibited. Bullying of students from other schools who are at a District activity, parents, school employees, guests, visitors, volunteers, and vendors of the District shall also not be tolerated and is strictly prohibited.

All students, parents, employees, guests, visitors, volunteers, and vendors shall conduct themselves civilly and responsibly and in a manner consistent with school policies related to student, parent, employee, and visitor conduct. This policy prohibiting bullying shall apply to all students, parents, employees, guests, visitors, volunteers, and vendors while on school property, while attending or participating in school activities, on school-owned property or on non-school property, while in any school-owned or leased vehicle, while at a school bus stop, or when in a private vehicle located on school property during school or school activities.

The District shall investigate all reported instances involving bullying. Unless a different person is designated by the Superintendent to conduct the investigation, the Principal of the school attendance center where the bullying is alleged to have occurred is responsible for investigating the alleged bullying. Allegations of bullying may also be reported by the administration to other authorities, including but not limited to law enforcement.

Students who violate this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. Employees who violate this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Parents, guests, visitors, volunteers, and vendors who violate this policy may be prohibited from being on school property.

Visit https://www.westcentral49-7.com/documents/district/school-policies/610383 to view policy JFCD- Bullying. The policy outlines the definition of bullying, reporting procedures, and bullying complaints. Within our district policies, you will also find JFCD-Bullying exhibits to report bullying.

EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Every homeless child is entitled to equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other students. The District will strive to ensure the enrollment and attendance of homeless children not currently attending school. The District will enroll a child who is homeless regardless of residence and irrespective of whether the homeless child is able to produce records normally required for enrollment.

Homeless children will have access to services comparable those offered to other students, including but not limited to:

1. Transportation services;
2. Educational services for which a student meets eligibility criteria (e.g., Title I);
3. Educational programs for students with disabilities and limited English proficiency;
4. Programs in vocational and technical education;
5. Programs for gifted and talented students; and
6. School nutrition program.

The District will review and revise as necessary those policies, rules or procedures that may be barriers to enrollment of homeless children. In reviewing and revising such procedures, the District will consider issues of transportation, immunization, residence, birth certificates, school records, and other documentation.

For further information or questions regarding this act, please contact the district homeless liaison coordinator.

STUDENT RECORDS NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the District receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading.

Parents or eligible students may ask West Central School District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the

District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the District discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll [NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.].

(4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
600 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605

PUBLIC NOTICE OF THE INTENT OF WEST CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT #49-7 TO RELEASE PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION REGARDING STUDENTS OR FORMER STUDENTS

STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that the District, with certain exceptions, obtain written consent from parents, guardians or from students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students"), prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from the student's education records. The main exception is that the District may disclose designated "directory information" without written consent, unless the parent, guardian or eligible student has informed the District that prior written consent is required before disclosing the directory information. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the District to include this type of information from the student's education records in certain school publications.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's, guardian's or eligible student's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks.

If a student's parent, guardian or an eligible student, does not want the District to disclose directory information from the student's education records without prior written consent, the student's parent, guardian or an eligible student must notify the District in writing within thirty (30) days of the beginning of the school year or, if enrolling after the beginning of the school year, within thirty (30) days of enrollment.

The District has designated the following information as directory information:

1. Student's name;
2. Address;
3. Telephone number;
4. Email address;
5. Name(s) of Parent(s);
6. Photograph;
7. Date and place of birth;
8. Dates of attendance;
9. Grade level;
10. Participation (including video) in officially recognized activities and sports;
11. Weight and height of members of athletic teams;
12. Degrees, honors, and awards received;
13. The most recent educational agency or institution attended.

The District shall provide, by November first of each year, a list of students by name in grades seven to twelve, inclusive, together with their mailing addresses, to the executive director of the Board of Regents and to each technical college located in the state unless the parent has directed that the District not release directory information about the student.

The District shall provide to military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as is provided generally to postsecondary educational institutions or to prospective employers of those students; and shall, upon a request made by military recruiters for military recruiting purposes, provide access to secondary school student names, addresses, and telephone listings, unless the parent of the student has submitted a request to the District that the student's information not be released without prior written parental consent.

The District shall annually notify parents of the types of student directory information released. The notice will include:

1. An explanation of the parent's or eligible student's right to request that information not be disclosed without prior written consent;
2. Notice that the school routinely discloses names, addresses, and telephone numbers to the South Dakota Board of Regents and each technical college located in the state and, upon request, to military recruiters, subject to a parent's or eligible student's request not to disclose such information without written consent; and
3. Notification on how the parent or eligible student may opt out of the public, nonconsensual disclosure of directory information and the method and timeline within which to do so.

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL OR PROCEDURES

This policy provides direction for the District to process complaints about school personnel or procedures. For the process of hearing complaints about federally funded programs (including parents of students experiencing homelessness), see District Policy KLDF. Complaints involving identification of or provision of services to students receiving special education and related services are addressed pursuant to the special education rules of the South Dakota Department of Education. The School Board places trust in its employees and desires to support their actions in such a manner that employees are freed from unnecessary, spiteful or negative criticism and complaints.

Whenever a complaint is made directly to the School Board as a body, or to a Board member as an individual, it will be referred to the school administration.

Procedures

Constructive criticism of the schools will be welcomed by the Board when it is motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the educational program or to equip the schools to do their tasks more effectively.

Whenever a complaint is made directly to the School Board as a whole or to an individual Board Member, the individual or group involved will be advised to obtain a complaint form from the District office and to follow the provisions of Board Policy.

The Board believes that complaints and grievances are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible, and that the staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to the involvement by the School Board or administration. Therefore, the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline, will be as follows:

1. Teacher/classified employee
2. Director of Activities (as may apply)
3. Principal
4. Superintendent of Schools
5. School Board

The School Board expects the professional staff and all employees to receive complaints courteously and to make a proper reply to the complaint.

Matters referred to the superintendent and/or School Board must be in writing and should be specific in terms of the action desired.

Complaints involving the Board, its members or policies may be pursued through the state court system.

Complaint Resolution

Whenever a complaint about a school employee or program is received by the administration from a patron of the district, a copy of the policy and procedure for the filing and resolution of the complaint shall be given to the patron.

Step 1:

The Patron will meet informally with the school employee in an effort to resolve the matter quickly at the lowest level possible. If the informal process is not satisfactory to the complainant, the matter will be reduced to writing on the District's complaint form (See File KLD-E) and submitted to the program supervisor to resolve the issue. If the issue is not resolved, the patron may submit it to the Principal. A copy of the complaint will be given to the employee by the Principal. The employee may respond in writing.

Step 2:

The Principal will meet with the patron and employee individually or jointly in an attempt to resolve the problem and conduct such other investigation as the Principal deems necessary. The Principal shall render his or her decision to both parties in writing within ten (10) working school days or less. If resolution is agreeable to the patron and the employee, the Principal's decision shall be delivered to the Superintendent. If no agreement is reached, either the Patron or the Employee may go to Step 3 provided notice is given to the Superintendent within five (5) working school days of receipt of the Principal's decision.

Step 3:

The complaint with the Principal's action and any information developed by the Principal's investigation will be given to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will meet with the patron, employee and Principal together or individually. The Superintendent shall conduct such further investigation as the Superintendent deems necessary. The Superintendent writes a decision within five (5) days of completing his or her investigation and notifies the patron, employee, and Principal. The Superintendent's decision may affirm, reverse or modify the Principal's decision. The patron or employee may within five (5) working school days go to Step 4 by notifying the Superintendent in writing of the desire to go to Step 4.

Step 4:

The School Board will consider the complaint while meeting in executive session. The Superintendent will provide the Board with the file packet, which contains the complaint, employee's response, Principal's decision and Superintendent's decision. The Board may affirm the Superintendent's decision upon the written record as it then exists. The Board

may determine to conduct a formal hearing on the matter. At this hearing, the patron will explain the complaint, the Superintendent will explain the Administration's response. Any party to the hearing may call such witnesses as they deem necessary. The Board may summon such additional witnesses or documents as it deems necessary. All testimony or statements at this hearing shall be under oath and the parties shall be reminded that penalties for perjury can be imposed regarding testimony given under oath. The School Board will render its decision within thirty (30) days of the hearing, which will be implemented by the Superintendent. The Patron or the Employee may appeal this decision within 90 days to the Circuit Court as per SDCL 13-46. All federal program complaints, shall be addressed under the Federal Program Complaint Procedure KLDF.

PARENTS RIGHT TO KNOW NOTICE

Parents Right to Know Statute Section 1112

At the beginning of each school year, any local educational agency that receives federal funds such as Title I monies shall notify the parents of each student attending West Central School of their right to have the school provide information regarding the professional qualifications of any of their children's classroom teachers, including, at a minimum, the following:

1. Whether the teachers/paraprofessionals have met State qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teachers provide instruction.
2. Whether the teachers/paraprofessionals are teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualifications or licensing criteria have been waived.
3. The baccalaureate degree major of the teachers and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teachers, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.

Parents also have the right to know:

1. Information on the level of achievement of the parent's child in each of the State academic assessments as required under this statute.
2. Timely notice that the parent's child has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

Testing Transparency

Each year in the spring the West Central School District provides the South Dakota Assessment test to students in 3rd -8th grade. The South Dakota Assessments tests over Math and English at each grade level. The District's 11th-graders will take the ACT assessment each spring.

The district is also required in 5th and 8th grades to test over science standards. This science assessment is performed during the same time frame as the South Dakota Assessments.

On a rotating basis, the district provides the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). This test is given to 4th, 8th, and 12th graders. The NAEP test assesses students in the areas of Math and English Language Arts.

In January each year, the West Central School District assesses our English Language Learners on the WIDA assessment.

Language Instruction

The WIDA assessment will be administered to identified students within the first 30 days of the beginning of the year. After receiving the ACCESS scores, the district will implement a language instruction plan. The language instruction plan shall be implemented within 30 days of receiving the ACCESS scores.

NOTICE TO ALL PARENTS OR GUARDIANS

On Dec. 10, 2015, President Obama signed into law the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This reauthorization, known as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), replaces the previous version of the law enacted in 2002, the No Child Left Behind Act.

State Plan

ESSA requires all states to develop a plan for education that addresses major federal requirements. South Dakota's state plan was developed over the course of a year, with input from stakeholders across the state, including educators, parents, students, legislators, tribal representatives, representatives from higher education, and others.

The core academic subjects are English; Reading or Language Arts: Mathematics; Science; Foreign Language; Social Studies (Civics, Government, Economics, History, Geography); and The Arts (Visual Arts & Music).

If you have any questions regarding your child's teacher's qualifications, please feel free to contact the district office. For additional information about teacher state certifications, please visit Teacher 411 at the South Dakota Department of Education website: https://www.sd.gov/411.

SCHOOL NURSE'S CORNER

Back to School Tips for Parents

Help your child adjust to earlier bedtimes a week or two before the new school year starts. Getting enough sleep is critical for kids to stay healthy and be successful in school. Not getting enough sleep is linked with lower academic achievement, as well as higher rates of absenteeism and tardiness.

Have your child turn off electronic devices well before bedtime. Start cutting back on screen time a couple weeks ahead of the start of the school year. This is especially true right before bedtime.

Encourage your child to eat breakfast. Children who eat a nutritious breakfast function better. They do better in school, and have better concentration and more energy.

Make sure your child has a water bottle for school. Staying hydrated throughout the day is important for children to learn and stay healthy. Make sure they bring their water bottle home at least every weekend to get washed before going back to school.

Choose a backpack with wide, padded shoulder straps. Organize your child's backpack to use all of its compartments. Pack heavier items closest to the center of the back. Go through the pack with your child weekly and remove unneeded items to keep it light. Remind your child to always use both shoulder straps. Slinging a backpack over one shoulder can strain muscles.

Help support good homework and study habits. Create an environment that is homework friendly. Children need a consistent workspace in their bedroom or another part of the home that is quiet and without distractions. Make sure TV and other electronic distractions stay off during homework time. Supervise computer and internet use.

Put yourself in their shoes. Although going back to school, for some, means catching up with friends, it can be frightening for others. Reassure your child that being nervous is natural. Show them some techniques to calm their fears. Let your child know that school is a fun, safe learning environment with adults to answer all their questions or concerns.

Kathy Painter, BSN
West Central Humboldt Elementary Nurse

Immunization Requirements

Students entering **Junior Kindergarten, Kindergarten** or **Sixth grade** have requirements for school entry.

Junior Kindergarten/Kindergarten Immunization Requirements:

1. Four or more doses of diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DTaP) vaccine with at least one dose after age 4.
2. Four or more doses of poliovirus vaccine, with at least one dose after age 4.
3. Two doses of measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine, minimum age for the first dose is 12 months.
4. Two doses of varicella (chicken pox) vaccine, minimum age for the first dose is 12 months. History of disease is an acceptable exemption with parent of guardian signature.

Sixth Grade Immunization Requirements:

1. One dose of Tdap is required for sixth grade entry if the student is 11 years old. If the student is 10 years old upon sixth grade entry, they will have 45 days after their 11th birthday to receive this immunization.
2. One dose of MCV4 (Meningitis) is required for sixth grade entry if the student is 11 years old. If the student is 10 years old upon sixth grade entry, they will have 45 days after their 11th birthday to receive this immunization.

Exemptions:

There are two exemptions accepted by the State of South Dakota, religious and medical.
1. Per SD Codified Law 13-28- 7.1, medical exemptions are a certification from a licensed physician stating the physical condition of a child would be such that immunization would endanger the child's life or health.
2. Religious exemptions qualify if the child is an adherent to a religious doctrine whose teachings are opposed to such immunization. If a parent or guardian would like to request a religious exemption, paperwork can be filled out with the school nurse.

Does your child have medication that must be administered during school hours?

Medications that cannot be given outside of school hours may be given by qualified staff at school. Medications which require administration at school must be delivered by the parent or guardian to the school to a qualified staff member. Medications must be in the original container. Ask your pharmacy for a duplicate container if needed.

Parents or guardians must also complete a Request and Authorization for Medication in School form for both over-the-counter medications, as well as, prescription medications. If the medication is a prescription, the Request

and Authorization for Medication in School form must be filled out and signed by the prescribing provider and delivered to the student's school.

The Request and Authorization for Medication in School form can be found on the West Central School District home page and at the District Registration Day on August 3rd.

Please contact the School Nurse if you have any questions or concerns.

School Nurse
West Central School District
(605) 528-3215 ext. 1302



DISTRICT WIDE REGISTRATION DAY

AUGUST 3, 2026

NEW STUDENTS 10 AM – 6 PM
RETURNING STUDENTS 11 AM – 7 PM

PICTURE DAY

Scherling Photography will be set up and ready to take your child's school pictures

REGISTRATION SUPPORT

Having problems registering online? We can help. We will have computers set up with hands-on support.

PAYMENTS AND MORE

Transportation, Activity Passes, Nutrition Services, Trojan Apparel, and Computer Fees

NEED A CAMPUS PASSWORD RESET?
Complete the form below. You will receive an email when your password has been reset.
https://forms.gle/gaLZ5T8S4kgk7hXk9

BACK-TO-SCHOOL REGISTRATION AND PICTURE DAY

AUGUST 3, 2026

West Central High School

The West Central School District is excited to welcome both new and returning students on **Monday, August 3**, at **West Central High School** for district-wide registration, school photos, and more.

Registration Times

- **New Students:** 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. (by appointment only)
- **Returning Students:** 11:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

To streamline the process, **online registration should be completed prior to August 3**. Visit the Registration tab at www.westcentral49-7.com for links, detailed instructions, and necessary documents. **Online payments** can be made through the **Revtrak** tab on the same site.

For families needing assistance, computers will be available at the high school on August 3, with staff providing hands-on support for completing online registration. **All registrations must be finalized by the end of the day on August 3.**

Please note: Computer/iPad fee must be paid before a device is allowed to be distributed and in-town bussing fees must be paid before transportation is provided.

School Photos

Scherling Photography will be on-site to take school photos for students in **grades EC–12.** These photos will be used for student IDs and the yearbook. Order forms will be available for families wishing to purchase picture packages. **A make-up photo day** will be scheduled later in the school year for those who are unable to attend.

High School Computers and Middle School Computers/iPads

High School students will be able to pick up their computers on Tuesday, August 18th from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. Middle School students will receive their devices on the first day of school.

Important:

Transportation requests received after **August 3** will not be processed until **September 1.** If your registration is submitted after August 3, your child **will not be eligible to ride the bus until September 1.**

Additional Services Available on Registration Day

- Payment stations
- School nurse consultations
- Transportation services
- Food service payments and assistance
- Activity passes
- Spirit wear (Booster Club)
- PTA and school organization booths

Registration Checklist

- Complete **online registration** via the Parent Portal (on the district website **Registration** tab)
- Submit **online payments** via Revtrak
- Request **transportation**
- Pay **computer use fee** (required for middle and high school students)
- Settle any outstanding **computer damage** or **band** fees
- **Optional:**
  - Activity passes through Bound
  - Yearbooks
  - Instrument rental fee

Pay Junior Class Fees (required for 11th-grade students)
Make **food service payments**

Back-to-School Forms

Available on the **Registration tab** at

www.westcentral49-7.com

- School supply lists
- Medicaid consent form
- Prescription medication form
- Physical and health history forms
- Special diet request forms
- Free & reduced meal applications

WEST CENTRAL TRANSPORTATION

Register to Ride (Rural & In-Town Busing)
- **Rural busing** is available for all qualifying K–12 students.
- **In-town** busing is available for K–8 students (fee required).

Important:
- Registration must be completed **online during school registration.**
- **Deadline:** Monday, August 3
- Registration reopens **Tuesday, September 1**

If you miss the deadline, your child will **not be able to ride the bus** until registration reopens.

Payment (In-Town Busing):
Online payment is preferred, but payments may also be dropped off at the administration office or any school building.

Bus Information:
- Rural families will be contacted by drivers by **August 17** with route details.
- In-town routes:
  - Morning pick-up: **7:40 AM**
  - Afternoon drop-off: **3:40–4:00 PM**

Hartford ↔ Humboldt Shuttle
- Shuttle departs **8:10 AM** from both Hartford and Humboldt
- No cost to ride

Locations:
- Riders from Hartford → Humboldt: drop-off is the west-side bus lane
- Riders from Humboldt → Hartford: Bus drive at Humboldt

Reminder: Please have students at school early so they don't miss the shuttle.

Bus Expectations & Safety
- Riding the bus is a **privilege.**
- Students are expected to: **Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Safe.**

The bus is an extension of the classroom. Students should behave as they would in the classroom. Respect for other students and their property, the bus, and the driver are required. Unsafe or inappropriate behavior may result in loss of riding privileges.

Food, Drink & Restroom Guidelines
- **No food or drink allowed on buses**
- Breakfast is available at school
- Buses do **not** stop for restroom breaks
- Students must remain on the bus until arrival at school or their stop

Be Ready at Your Stop
- Arrive **early** to your stop
- Bus times may vary by up to **10 minutes** due to weather, traffic, or other factors
- In-town routes may occasionally use a different bus

Pickup & Drop-Off Locations

High School & Middle School
- High School: **East side (front doors)**
- Middle School:
  - **West parking lot**
  - Enter from **2nd Street**, drive south following the painted arrows around the parked cars, and then north to the school doors.

Important:
- Horseshoe driveway is for **buses and school vehicles only**
- Do NOT enter this area with personal vehicles

Humboldt Elementary
- Use the **north circular drive** for drop-off and pick-up
- **Bus lane (east side) is for buses only**
- Do NOT drop students off in the bus lane to enter the back of the building

Hartford Elementary
- Bus Riders to and from Hartford Elementary: East side (playground side)
- Shuttle to Humboldt: Bus drive on the West side (Feyder Ave)
- Drop-Off students
  - 8:00-8:25 - Playground (East Side)
  - 7:45-8:00 - Will go to the gym



Morning Shuttle Riders:
- Wait in the **gym**
- **Please do not wait outside** (no outdoor supervision)

Safety Reminders:
- Do not block bus lanes or entrances
- Park away from bus entry/exit points
- **Use crosswalks only**—never cross between buses

General Pickup & Drop-Off Reminders
- Pull up to the curb/sidewalk
- Drop off students quickly and safely
- Exit promptly to keep traffic moving
- **Do not use bus lanes**

Transportation Contact Information
If your student will **not ride the bus in the morning**, call before **6:30 AM**:

Transportation Office: 528-6235 (Messages can be left 24/7)
- Leave a message with:
  - Student name
  - Address
  - Bus/driver (if known)

For questions about routes or transportation, please contact the transportation office.

WEST CENTRAL CHILD NUTRITION SERVICES 2026-27

As we begin a new school year, the West Central Child Nutrition Team is excited to welcome students back to the cafeteria for healthy breakfasts, nutritious lunches, and friendly smiles each day! Our goal is to ensure every student has access to meals that help them learn, grow, and succeed in the classroom.

Help Your Family Save: Free & Reduced Meal Applications Now Available

We encourage all families to complete the Free and Reduced Meal Application. Even if you are unsure whether you qualify, we strongly encourage you to apply, as eligibility can provide valuable benefits for your household, including reduced or no-cost meals for students, additional program funding for our schools, and possible fee waivers for other school-related expenses. With the rising cost of living continuing to impact many families, applying for meal benefits may be especially helpful and advantageous in supporting your household budget.

We are also pleased to share that the State of South Dakota is currently covering the cost of reduced-price meals, meaning students who qualify for reduced benefits will receive meals at no cost. This is a meaningful support for families and helps ensure that all students have access to nutritious meals each school day.

For families who do not qualify for free or reduced meal benefits but may still need support, assistance may be available through Project 22 funds. These resources are intended to help bridge gaps and support students and families facing financial challenges.

Applications are available online through School Café, https://www.schoolcafe.com/WESTCENTRAL, or request a paper copy. The application can be completed at



any time throughout the school year. Each school year requires a new application, so even returning families must reapply.

We appreciate your time in completing this important application and your continued partnership in supporting student success.

School Café Makes Meal Accounts Easy
Families are encouraged to use the SchoolCafé app or website, https://www.schoolcafe.com/WESTCENTRAL to conveniently manage student meal accounts. Through SchoolCafé, families can:

- View meal account balances
- Track student purchases
- Set low balance notifications
- Make online deposits
- Apply for free or reduced-price meal benefits
- View menus

Payment options, cash and check options can be dropped off at any of the building secretaries or cafeterias.
- Cash can be dropped off with any building secretary or cafeteria.
- Checks can be dropped off with any building secretary or cafeteria. Checks may be divided between multiple students, please **indicate** on the memo line of the check.
- School Café, $2.95 convenience fee is applicable for online payment.

Fuel their day. Feed their future!

SCHOOL BREAKFAST & LUNCH

Healthy today. Ready to learn tomorrow.

Good nutrition helps students LEARN, GROW & THRIVE!



DID YOU KNOW?

- Students who eat a healthy breakfast are **more alert**, have **better concentration** and perform better in class.
- Well-nourished students have **higher attendance rates** and are more likely to graduate.
- School meals must follow **strict nutrition standards** that help students get the nutrients they need every day.
- School meals are an **affordable choice** for families and help support your household budget.



GOOD FOOD. BRIGHT MINDS. BETTER FUTURES.

WHAT'S ON YOUR TRAY?

Every school meal includes the 5 key food groups:

- FRUITS
- VEGETABLES
- GRAINS
- PROTEIN
- DAIRY

A balanced meal helps students stay focused, energized and ready to learn!

DON'T SKIP BREAKFAST!



Starting the day with a healthy breakfast can improve memory, mood and attention.

SCHOOL MEALS SUPPORT:

- Student success in and out of the classroom
- Local economies by supporting local farmers and businesses
- A healthier community for today and tomorrow

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

School meals are for **all** students.



Our goal is to make sure every student has access to the nutrition they need to reach their full potential.

Thank you for supporting our School Lunch & Breakfast Program!

Together, we're building healthy habits that last a lifetime.

FOCUS ENERGY HEALTH SUCCESS

HEALTHY MEALS. HEALTHY STUDENTS. STRONGER TOMORROWS.

WEST CENTRAL CHILD NUTRITION SERVICES 2026-27

Meal account balances automatically roll over from one school year to the next, so any remaining funds at the end of the year will stay in your student's account and be available for future meal purchases.

Understanding Offer vs. Serve
West Central is an "Offer vs. Serve" District. This means students are offered all meal components but may choose all/some of the items they would like to eat. This allows students the freedom to choose what they like and help reduce food waste and ensures students receive a nutritious meal.

For lunch, students must select at least:
- 3 different meal components of the 5 offered (Fruit, Vegetable, Grain, Meat/Meat Alternate, Milk)
- One selection must include a fruit or vegetable

Making the Best of Your Lunch
Choosing a complete reimbursable meal gives students the best value and the most food for the price. Individual à la carte items can add up quickly, so families are encouraged to talk with students about building a complete meal instead of purchasing extra snack items separately.

A reimbursable meal not only stretches meal account dollars farther, but also provides a balanced meal that helps students stay fueled throughout the school day.

Menu access
West Central website: https://www.westcentral49-7.com/page/menus
School Café: https://www.schoolcafe.com/menus

Our Nutrition staff encourages you to join your student for lunch. Please let the building secretary know by 9:00 am so we can add you to our lunch count. Unfortunately, we cannot charge your student's lunch account so please bring enough money to cover the cost of the meal.

We look forward to serving your students this year and appreciate your partnership in keeping our cafeterias welcoming, healthy, and positive places for all students!

Please contact the Child Nutrition Office with any questions.

Tanya Thomas-Parsons, West Central Child Nutrition Director
605-528-6238 OR
Tanya.Thomas-Parsons@k12.sd.us

ELEMENTARY NEWS

Mrs. Ashley Bahrenfuss, Hartford Elementary Principal
605-528-3215

Mrs. Amy Larson, Humboldt Elementary Principal
605-363-3131

West Central Elementary Families,

We are so excited to welcome you back into our buildings for the 2026–2027 school year! Our entire staff has put in a great deal of effort to ensure we are ready for our younger Trojans to return to school. As we gear up to get back into the "school" routine, there are a few new people and exciting updates we'd like to share with you! First, we'd like to welcome the staff members who are new to us this year!

Mrs. Amy Larson (Humboldt Principal)
I am excited and honored to serve as the principal of Humboldt Elementary. My husband, Dave, and I have called the Hartford area home for nearly 20 years, and our family has been proud to be part of the West Central community during that time. Our daughter, Hadley, is a nursing student at Augustana University, and our son, Luke, will be a junior at West Central High School this fall.

I earned my bachelor's degree in Math Education and my master's degree in Educational Administration from the University of South Dakota. Throughout my career, I have had the opportunity to work with students in a variety of educational settings and grade levels, which has strengthened my passion for helping all students learn, grow, and succeed.

I am grateful for the opportunity to join the Humboldt Elementary team and look forward to partnering with our students, families, and staff as we continue the great work already happening in our school.

Mr. Jake Voorhis (Humboldt K-5 Music, Hartford JK/K Music):

I am originally from Belle Fourche, SD, near Spearfish. I attended Chadron State College in Nebraska, receiving an Applied Music Degree for Guitar and Bass Performance, and later attended the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, to receive my teaching credentials. My family and I spent 10 years in Nebraska performing music and teaching music both privately and publicly. After attending UNL, I held a K-12 Vocal music teaching position in Wymore, NE. In June of 2024, we decided it was time to come home to South Dakota, and we couldn't be happier to be back, even if we're East River now! Since returning, for the last two years, I have been the Elementary Music Teacher in Beresford, SD. My wife is Megan Voorhis, the K-12 Vocal Music Teacher at McCook Central, and our son, Bowen, is 3 years old. Outside of music and education, I am a huge nerd and will always be ready to have a much too in-depth conversation about anything Sci-Fi or Fantasy. I am very grateful for the opportunity to join the West Central School District, and I can't wait to begin making music with a whole new batch of awesome kids!

Ms. Brooke Katzer (Humboldt Special Education):

I grew up in Montrose with my mom and dad, twin sister, and younger brother. After graduating from high school, I attended Southeast Technical College with a degree in Early Childhood Education. I've been an Education Assistant here at West Central while completing my Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education/Special Education. I recently graduated from Dakota State University. I'm extremely excited to start the new school year as a Special Education teacher here at West Central.

Mrs. Terri Knight (District Head Nurse):

I have enjoyed working in a wide variety of nursing areas over the past 23 years. The last two years, I have worked as a school nurse for the Tea Area School District. I am married with 4 kids and 2 dogs and love supporting the Trojans! I am excited to help students achieve and grow to their fullest potential!

This year also marks the beginning of the implementation of our new math curriculum, i-Ready. Throughout the last school year, a team of teachers met regularly to learn about and explore different math curriculum options as our district prepared to adopt a new program. The team began by reviewing eight different curricula before ultimately selecting i-Ready as the best fit for our students and district needs. Teachers have already begun training and planning for the new curriculum, and we are excited to introduce it to our students and families this fall!

As planning for the school year begins, we also want to make sure you have some important events added to your calendars. Below is a sneak peek at a few key dates during the first semester of the school year:

Date	Event	Date	Event
August 3rd	New Student Registration (10:00-11:00 am) District Registration Day (11:00-7:00 pm)	October 19th	Parent/Teacher Conferences (11:00-7:00 pm) *No School*
August 17th	Elementary Open House (5:30-7:00 pm)	November 2nd	Hartford Elementary 3rd Grade Concert
August 19th	First Day of School	December 1st	Hartford Elementary K-2 Concerts
September 14th	Homecoming Week	December 7th	Humboldt Elementary Concerts

We hope you continue to enjoy the remainder of your summer, taking time to relax, recharge, and make lasting memories with family and friends. As August approaches, we are excited to welcome everyone back for another great school year filled with learning, growth, and new opportunities. We look forward to seeing our students and families again soon and kicking off a fantastic year together!

Go Trojans!

Mrs. Ashley Bahrenfuss
Hartford Elementary Principal

Mrs. Amy Larson
Humboldt Elementary Principal

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

Mark Rockafellow, Principal

605-528-3799

Summer is flying by and the new school year is coming soon. I'm hopeful that your summer was filled with enjoyable times with family and friends. We are busily preparing for the start of the new school year.

Our custodial staff has been diligently preparing the buildings for the upcoming year. I enjoy walking into the rooms with freshly waxed or shampooed floors. We are blessed with a custodial and building and grounds staff that takes great pride in their work. Please show respect for their efforts by helping keep our facilities clean.

We welcome two new certified staff members to the middle school. Ms. Danielle Hartog will be teaching seventh-grade Math and Social Studies. She is new to the teaching profession but not new to education. Ms. Karley Sydow will be serving as our school counselor and teaching Life Skills. We welcome both new staff members and are excited to watch them contribute to the West Central School community.

The tech staff is working to prepare devices for the upcoming year. All students in the middle school will be using a MacBook. The sixth and seventh grade students will use new MacBook Neos. Students will be expected to demonstrate a high level of respect and care for the devices.

A couple responsibilities worth mentioning include charging the device at home and proper care. Students will need to charge the Macbook at home. Students are issued charging cords specific to the device they receive. Charging is no more difficult to do than charging a cell phone. Having a fully charged device is essential for the effective use of technology each day. We also encourage students to leave their charging cords at home so as not to risk the loss of them while transporting to and from school.

Students will receive instruction on proper care which will include keeping it in the carrying case whenever not in use, including in and between classes and on the bus ride to and from school, and respecting the device. This proper care will help reduce the potential for breakage.

As you begin to purchase school supplies, please refrain from purchasing fidget devices unless your child is on a 504 plan or IEP and they have a specific accommodation for a fidget. NeeDohs and similar products are not allowed, as well as, all other fidgets or toys used as fidgets. The fidgets turn into distracting toys.

Some important dates to remember for the start of the school year:

New-to-the-district Student Registration
August 3 - 10:00am - 6:00pm

District Registration and Picture Day
August 3 - 11:00am - 7:00pm

Middle School Open House
August 17 - 5:30pm - 7:00pm

First Day of School
August 19 - 8:30am - 3:30pm

Speaking of the open house, we will be hosting parent/student sessions for all grade levels this year. Each grade-level session will be twenty-five minutes long. We request that a parent and student attend their respective session.

The middle school years can be both challenging and rewarding. We look forward to helping middle school students navigate the multitude of changes happening in their development and in their school lives. Working together as a team will help ensure a productive year.

Mark Rockafellow, Principal
605-528-3799

HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

Dr. Andrew Barron, WCHS Principal
605-528-6236

A New Parking Lot and Front Office for the High School

If you passed by the high school this summer, you probably saw the project to replace the parking lot. What is less visible was a project to remake our front office reception area. The combined effect will be a much warmer welcome to our public.

Parking lots do not get a lot of attention, but to me, they symbolize the vitality of the school. When we have a game, a concert, or graduation, the parking lot is full and overflowing into the grass. I hope the new parking lot, which will have more spaces, will mean people don't have to get creative in making their own parking spots, but more importantly, I hope people feel even more welcome at our home events. Our school is the center of much of the civic life in the district, and we want as many people to participate as possible.

When people enter our building, we want them to see the pride that this community has in its schools. The front office area, which has never been updated since the building was built, will have a new counter and redesigned waiting area. It has been redesigned with both function and safety in mind.

Our students, who will benefit from these improvements, will, no doubt, take pride in them and know that this community continues to invest in their future. The public, likewise, can see these improvements as a sign that our community is thriving. When it is time for the next big event at West Central High School, the parking lot will be full of cars and full of life!

Dr. Barron, High School Principal

2026-2027 COMPUTER FEES

How much will it cost for a MacBook for my child?

A MacBook for students in grades 6 & 7 will cost a non-refundable fee of $40 per student enrolled.

A MacBook for students in grades 8 - 12 will cost a non-refundable fee $50 per student enrolled.

Payments should be made on-line through https://westcentral.revtrak.net/

We ask that payments be made by District Student Registration Day.

When can I pick up my MacBook?
HS students may pick up their MacBooks on August 18th from 9am to 5pm at the HS Help Desk, provided that the fee has been paid by August 17th.

All MS devices will be distributed on the first day of school.

Any remaining HS devices will be available for pickup at the HS Help Desk on the first day of school.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Andray Knutson, Special Services Director
Andray.Knutson@k12.sd.us 605-528-3217

WELCOME TO THE **2026-2027** SCHOOL YEAR!

The West Central Special Services Department is committed to delivering a comprehensive range of educational programs in accordance with state and federal regulations. These services are available to eligible students residing within the boundaries of our school district. Our programs are tailored to meet the unique needs of each student and may include services under **Special Education, Section 504, English Language Learner (ELL) support, and Title** programs. Each service is designed to foster academic success and personal growth, ensuring equitable access to education for all learners. All programs are implemented by our team of highly qualified professionals, who work collaboratively with families to create and support individualized education plans. Parental involvement is a vital component of our approach, and we actively encourage families to participate in every phase of the educational process. Our goal is to support students in achieving their full potential by providing the necessary resources, instruction, and support systems to address diverse learning needs.

Special Education Special Education programs are guided by a federal law entitled The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), combined with our state administrative rules.

Special education services are provided for eligible children from birth through twenty-one years of age in accordance with the child's individual education plan (IEP).

The West Central School District provides special education services to approximately 250 students across our buildings. The Special Education department is responsible for the identification, evaluation, and programming, as well as the transitional needs, related programs, and educational records for children who are identified with a disability within the boundaries of our district. Evaluations, including speech-language assessments, utilize current evidence-based practices and nationally recognized normative data, such as the Crowe & McLeod Speech Sound Disorder Norms, to support educational decision-making.

The special education process in the West Central School District is as follows: a written request for a referral, file review of student progress, determination if an evaluation is necessary/unnecessary, and parental consent for evaluation, multidisciplinary evaluation, a multidisciplinary team meeting to determine eligibility, development of IEP if appropriate, services provided to the student, progress is measured and reported to parents, IEP is reviewed annually and child is reevaluated every three years. All aspects of the special education process are completed with parental involvement. A copy of the information is given to parents throughout the process.

A booklet titled South Dakota Parental Rights and Procedural Safeguards is provided to parents at the beginning of the special education process and again at each subsequent special education meeting.

Students are educated in the general education curriculum and classrooms to the maximum extent possible.

There are certified special education teachers and educational assistants in each school building at West Central. Support personnel may include a school psychologist, behavior interventionist, speech and language pathologists, and an occupational and physical therapist. Consult services for vision or hearing needs are also available, if necessary.

Many children and youth have mental, physical, emotional, or learning difficulties that make it difficult for them to be part of a school program without special help. If you think your child may require special education services, please discuss this with your child's teacher and/or principal. Together as a team, the educational needs of your child can be discussed, and a process can be determined to help your child receive the most appropriate educational program in the West Central School District.

If a student is not eligible for special education services through an individual education plan (IEP), but needs

special accommodations in the general educational environment, the student may be eligible for a Section 504 accommodation plan. The student's team determines if there is a qualifying impairment that limits major life activities for the student. If a qualifying impairment is determined, the team then creates a plan to help the student be successful in the educational environment.

English Language Learner (EL) students are provided support through differentiated instructional strategies and our EL teacher. The EL teacher, general education teachers, and administration work together to help English Language students (ELs) succeed. West Central is also a member of a South Dakota EL consortium, where additional resources can be accessed.

Title 1 services are provided to elementary students who may need additional reading and/or math support. All students can receive additional services without a student identification as a "Title I student" being made. Students identified as most at-risk are given additional assistance. Certified teachers work in small groups or individual settings and may provide instructional assistance to the classroom teachers.

If you have **children who are between the ages of birth to 5**, please consider attending our **FREE early childhood screening** on Thursday, September 10 at the St. George Catholic Church Hall. Please see the advertisement for this important event inside this newsletter, on our District website, or hanging at various businesses around the community.

Our district website is a valuable place to help find the resources that you need to support your child(ren). The link: https://www.westcentral49-7.com/specialservices will take you to the West Central Special Services page.

The **West Central School District** is dedicated to creating inclusive schools with programs and services that promote the success of all our students. We support collaboration between students, families, and the school staff. As always, feel free to contact me directly with any questions. I look forward to working with your families this year. I can be reached at 605-528-3210 or through my email at Andray.Knutson@k12.sd.us.

Andray Knutson, Special Services Director

Have a great year!

Early Childhood Screening

Parents often wonder if their child's development is typical of that seen in peers of the same age. Developmental screenings are designed to address these concerns and help parents learn more about their child's skills. The West Central School District offers a free developmental screening. These screenings are conducted by a team of District educators and the Birth to 3 program and are available to families living within the West Central School District whose children are within the ages of birth to 5 years of age.

An Early Childhood Screening Assesses your child's development in the areas of:

Communication
Gross Motor
Fine Motor
Problem-Solving
Personal-Social

Thursday, September 10, 2026
9:00AM – 7:00PM
Location: St. George Parish Hall

A link to sign up for a free developmental screening is available at https://www.westcentral49-7.com

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLWIDE TITLE I PROGRAMS

Title I is a federally funded program designed to ensure that all students have a fair and equal opportunity to obtain a high-quality education. Both Hartford Elementary and Humboldt Elementary are Title I schoolwide schools and have the assistance of Academic Interventionists to help support students in the content areas of reading and mathematics. The staff in these buildings regularly examine all students' assessment data. Students displaying a deficit in an area of reading or math may receive additional support to help them become proficient. The support offered may be very flexible.

Services may be offered to struggling students without the stigma attached to the Title I student classification. Flexible instructional groups based on assessment data and using Response to Intervention (RtI) continue to allow for specific, targeted instructional practices in all classrooms. Schoolwide Title I allows for increased differentiation opportunities and support based on student needs. Any student in grades kindergarten through fifth grade may receive additional services based on assessment data. While parent notification of additional services to students is not required in a Schoolwide program, it remains important to us at West Central that families are communicated with regularly.

As a part of the Title I program's federally required documentation, all Title I families will be provided a school-parent compact in monthly elementary newsletters. This compact is a promise that the school, the parents, and the student will all work toward helping the student meet academic standards. Family engagement is critical, and in fact, one of the components of a schoolwide program requires the school to employ strategies to increase family engagement. We believe that active family involvement is essential and is a shared responsibility for every student's success. Be on the lookout for a variety of school events to participate in throughout the school year.

As always, feel free to contact a building principal, an academic interventionist, our curriculum coordinator, or me with any questions you have. Check out the West Central Title I website at this link: https://www.westcentral49-7.com/title for more information and to view the required Title I documents.

Andray Knutson
Special Services Director
Andray.Knutson@k12.sd.us

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Darren Sindelar, Activities Director
Activities Office 605-528-6236

Greetings Trojan Nation!

This has been a GREAT year for our activities. I want to recognize the hard work and dedication of our students, coaches/advisors, and parents. It takes dedicated people at all levels to have successful programs. From the fall season to spring season, West Central competed with the best. I am proud of what our activities have done and what they have accomplished.

With one year under my belt, I can say I have learned a lot. With that being said, I have much more to learn. Success is a process. Believing in that process is what makes for strong programs year in and year out. If we all believe in the process, the product will take care of itself.

With the success our teams had in 2025-2026, I am excited for the 2026-2027 year. As we get closer to the new year, I want to make sure parents are aware of a few things:

1. SDHSAA activity registration is a vital part of the back to school registration process. This process is done through Bound. If a student is going to participate in an activity sponsored by the SDHSAA, the student must be registered for every single event they are going to participate in. The 2025-2026 school year was the first time the middle school and high school used Bound. There were a few bumps in the road, but as the year went on the smoother the road became. Please register students by August 3rd at http://www.gobound.com/sd/scools/westcentral.
2. Physicals are required annually. All student athletes in grades 7-12 must have a completed physical examination each school year to be eligible to participate in athletics. **Per school policy, any physical completed from April 1st of the previous year to the first practice is accepted. These completed physical forms must be uploaded to each student's Bound account. Athletes are not permitted to practice until physical examinations are completed and uploaded and have a completed Bound registration.**

3. The Code of Conduct can be found on the school website. Please familiarize yourself with the activity policies as well as school and district policies.

Upcoming Event Dates:

2nd Annual West Central Trojan Fall Kick-off: August 21st - 22nd
The 2025 event was a great addition. It is important to bring the community and school together. This event did just that. The West Central Booster Club does a fantastic job of supporting our programs at West Central. If you are not a member, please think about contacting the West Central Booster Club and join. The booster club email is westcentralboosterclub@gmail.com.

Practice Start Dates:

Band - Marching Band Preview Show: August 8th - 7:30 p.m.
Soccer - Monday, August 3rd
Boys' Golf - Monday, August 10th
Cross Country - Monday, August 10th
Football - Monday, August 10th
Volleyball - Thursday, August 13th
MS Football - Wednesday, August 19th (Tentative)
MS Volleyball - Wednesday, August 19th (Tentative)

GO TROJANS!

WC BAND NEWS

West Central has been honored with the Best Communities for Music Education (BCME) Award from The NAMM Foundation for their outstanding support and commitment to music education. Now in its 27th year, the program continues to spotlight and celebrate school districts and individual schools across the United States for their exemplary dedication to music education and their ongoing efforts to ensure equitable access to music learning as part of a well-rounded education.

The award reaches K-12 communities nationwide, offering both recognition and momentum to strengthen and expand music education programs. In 2026, more than 1,000 school districts and schools—including public, private, charter and parochial institutions—have been recognized for outstanding achievement in providing access to high-quality music education.

Recipients of the 2026 BCME Awards were selected through a comprehensive application and review process that evaluates key indicators, including funding, instructional time, participation rates, facilities and community support. To uphold the program's rigor and credibility, all applications were independently reviewed and verified by WolfBrown, a leading research and evaluation firm specializing in education and the arts.

The Marching Trojans have been working hard this summer learning their new competitive show. Come watch them debut their 2026 Field Show titled, All Mine, on August 8th at 7:30 pm at Jim Utrecht Stadium! It's free and open for all to attend.

Daniel.Eye@k12.sd.us
https://Danieleye.wixsite.com/westcentralband
Director of Bands

SUBSTITUTES WANTED

Teachers · Educational Assistants · Food Service · Transportation

Flexible hours – we will work with your schedule.

Wages starting at $18.50/hour

Visit www.westcentral49-7.com to apply or call Kylie at:

(605) 528-3217 ext. 1003

BOUND
WEST CENTRAL
ACTIVITY REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

REGISTER USING THE BOUND APP OR WEBSITE

2026 REGISTRATION OPEN

OPTION 1

BOUND APP

- **DOWNLOAD THE APP**

From the App Store or Google Play

- **LOG IN / SIGN UP**

Log in to your existing account, or tap **Sign Up** to create a family account

- **REGISTER FOR ACTIVITIES**

Tap the green **"Register for Activities"** button on the home screen to begin

OPTION 2

WEBSITE

- **GO TO THE WEBSITE**

https://www.gobound.com/sd/schools/westcentral
Click on the **Registration** tab

- **LOG IN / CREATE ACCOUNT**

Log in, or click **Create Your Account Now** to set up your family account

- **ADD STUDENT & REGISTER**

Add your child, then click **Register** to begin the activity registration process

HELP DESK AVAILABLE ON DISTRICT REGISTRATION DAY

AUGUST 3RD, 2026
WEST CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

SEE HELP DOCUMENTS ON SCHOOL WEBSITE UNDER "REGISTRATION TAB"



WCHS Theater 2026-2027 Season



Interested in any of the following?

- **Acting**
- **Singing**
- **Dancing**
- **Painting, Art, & Graphic Design**
- **Construction & Building Things**
- **Electronics: Sound & Lights**
- **Being Creative & Having Fun**

Consider joining the WCHS Theater Program in some capacity!

This Year's Shows

FALL PLAY (September-November)



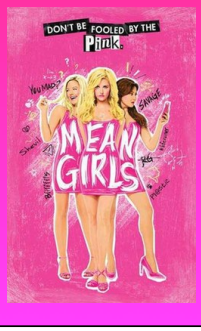
It took Mr. Banks's drama class three long months to prepare for their monologue show... but barely a minute to throw all their plans out the window. From the couple staging their real-life break-up to the garden-gnome thief confessing his crimes, everything that can go wrong will in this hilarious comedy.

ONE-ACT (November-January)



Iris has synesthesia. She has no idea. At first, she thinks that everyone sees colors and shapes when music plays, but by the time she's a teenager, it's clear that others don't understand. In *Soundscapes*, she struggles first to downplay, then understand, and finally accept and celebrate how she sees the world.

MUSICAL (February-April)



Cady Heron may have grown up on an African savanna, but nothing prepared her for the wild and vicious ways of her new home: high school. There she'll meet the Plastics, a trio led by the ruthless Regina George. When Cady and her friends devise to end Regina's reign, she learns the hard way that you can't cross a queen bee without getting stung.

Stop by at our Beginning-of-the-Year Meeting in Mr. Freier's Room at 3:45, August 20th (2nd Day of School) to learn more!

LIBRARY NEWS

Welcome back to school!

Please make the library one of your first stops!

If you happen to have any library books from last school year, please bring them to any of the school offices. Thank you!

Q: Where are the libraries located?

A: West Central hosts a school library at Hartford Elementary, Humboldt Elementary, and the High School / Middle School. There is an exciting collection of age-appropriate reading materials at each location, along with activities to get students excited about reading!

Q: How can I monitor my school library account?

A: Check out the West Central Libraries website at https://dananntirrel.wixsite.com/west-central-library, which has a link to your school library account. You will be able to see which items are checked out, the requests you have made, due dates, and any fees that have accrued.

Q: Can I return school items to the public branches?

A: Please return school items to any of the West Central school locations. All public library materials need to be returned to one of the Siouxland branches. The school library and public library are not affiliated with each other.

Q: How do I get in touch with one of the West Central librarians?

A: Here's their contact information:

WC High School/Middle School:
DaNann Tirrel (District Librarian)....danann.tirrel@k12.sd.us

WC Elementary – Humboldt:
Meredith DeCou.....meredith.decou@k12.sd.us

WC Elementary – Hartford:
Laura Johnson.....laura.j.johnson@k12.sd.us





West Central School District
Administration Office
P.O. Box 730
Hartford, SD 57033

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ECRWSS

BOX HOLDER

Join the West Central School District Team!

The West Central School District is hiring for the following positions:

Educational Assistants –$20.00/hour
Bus Drivers –$31.25/hour
Custodians –$19.50/hour
Substitute Teachers – $160/day

Join a supportive team dedicated to helping students succeed in a positive school environment. Competitive pay and benefits, rewarding work, and opportunities to make a difference every day!

Apply today at www.westcentral49-7.com.