

JEFFERSON JOURNAL

MAY 2026

- **6th-** 1st grade field trip to the farm
- **7th-** 4th grade field trip to Pelican Lake
- **12th-** 3rd grade field trip to the Codington County Museum
- **15th-** 2nd grade field trip to the zoo
- **18th & 19th-** 3rd grade trip to Redlin Art Center
- **20th-** Last day of school- early dismissal at 12:20

Just a reminder...



Note from the Office:

If your child has any medication in the office, please remember to pick up by May 29th.

MR. DECKER'S NOTES

Wow, What a Year! The journey is always long, but filled with so many memories. No one said the journey would be easy or have its frustration. That is a part of learning. I have watched so many smiles on children's faces when they figure something out or overcome something that was frustrating. Watching our students grow in manners and character each year is truly joyful for all of our teachers.

We will miss our fourth graders who have been excellent leaders and classmates. To those of you moving to another district or other plans, be well and safe, and learn lots. For without education, where would we be!?

We have many summer projects happening at JE. First, we will complete the air conditioning project and hope it will be ready to go by next Fall. Also, our North side parking lot will be repaved and sloped for better water run off. The stage will get a face-lift with new carpeting. And lastly, the inner office bathrooms are getting new flooring. Otherwise, Mr. Middleton and his crew will be working hard to clean each room and prepare our school for the Fall of 2026.



MR. DECKER'S NOTES

Back to School mailing will happen in mid-July. You will receive information from next year's teacher the latter part of July.

26-27 School Calendar

Looking ahead to next year, please start planning. We strive to have 90% attendance for all of our students. We are graded by the state of South Dakota and are asked to enforce attendance laws by the state of South Dakota. We understand illnesses and appreciate doctor notes to support these requests of absence. However, this past year there were many requests to extend vacations. There were many vacations outside of schedule vacations. This places additional stress on students for make-up work. This work cannot be replicated at home. We ask that everyone plan ahead. Appointments made prior to 10:00 AM and after 1:45 PM do not count as a half day absence and can be excused if a note is provided. We appreciate advanced communication with the classroom teacher or principal and understand that there are unique situations.

Attendance Traveling Trophy

We will continue our monthly challenge of rewarding the classroom from each grade level with a traveling trophy filled with their favorite candies. April's winner were:

- 1st- Mrs. Stack
- 2nd- Mrs. Johnson
- 3rd- Mrs. Turbak
- 4th- Mrs. Gilmour

Have a safe, fun, enjoyable summer!!

Sincerely,

John J. Decker
john.decker@k12.sd.us
605-882-6390

MR. DECKER'S NOTES

PTO Talent Show Winners

There were fourteen acts at this year's Talent Show. Singing, dancing, expressive reading, ukuleles, pianos, trumpets and magic were performed. We are proud of all the courageous participants. This year's judges were former students of Jefferson Elementary: Ty Sullivan, Jade Smith, Allison Konrad, and Ally Torgerson. Individual place winners this year were:

1st- Thias Yoder for trumpet

2nd- Maddie Cordell for piano and magic trick

3rd- Paizlee Meek for singing

4th- Bryer Wollschlager for dance

5th- Briggs Kinnander for Jokes



NWEA MAPS Testing

NWEA MAPS testing will begin on May 6th for Math and ELA. This is 1-4 grades. It is vital that students are in school during this testing. We utilize this data to develop small groups based on skills demonstrated and in preparation for next year. Thanks for your support.

MR. DECKER'S NOTES

Before School/After School

There has been a misunderstanding by some regarding before school and after school expectations.

Before school, we do not have supervision until 7:30 AM. Students are not allowed in the building until this time. They either go out to the West playground or to the lunchroom to eat breakfast. They are to eat prior to going outside. They are also to go to the West side of the building which is the playground. They should not be on the playground until 7:30 AM. Parents are to wait with their child until their is a supervisor present.

After school, students are expected to go directly home or to the car where their parents are waiting. They are not to play on the playground, South side, or East side, unless the parent is present. Otherwise, they are expected to remain on the sidewalk until a parent picks them up or is present to supervise them. Also, Jefferson does not have an after-school program. We have a place for students to go whose parents may be running late or have a once in a while situation where they cannot get here by 4:00. However, if students have a place to go, they are to go there. We do not provide snacks. Next year we will be monitoring this more closely. Please make arrangements for your child after school. We have a bus that goes directly to the boys/Girls Club and Educare will have more positions open.



After
School
Plans?

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Teacher Assignment Process

We understand that the relationship between teacher and student is vital to the success of the learning experience. Therefore, we would like to remind parents that we will not be taking specific teacher requests for the 2026-2027 school year. We believe that our experienced educational team is best equipped to make these important decisions that aim to benefit all students and promote an equitable learning environment.

However, we recognize that in some instances, there may be concerns about potential major conflicts between a student/family and a teacher based on past experiences. If you believe there is a significant issue that needs to be addressed, please do not hesitate to contact the building principal directly with your concerns. We are here to support your child's educational experience and will consider all serious inquiries to ensure the well-being of all students.

Accessing Teacher Information

To find out who your child's teacher will be for the 2026-2027 school year, please log in to the parent Infinite Campus portal on August 1. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we prepare the portal to provide you with the most accurate and updated information.

We are committed to maintaining open lines of communication and ensuring that all families feel confident and informed about the steps we are taking to prepare for a successful new school year. Please look forward to additional updates through our school push notifications, our school website, and the Infinite Campus portal.

Thank you for your understanding and continued partnership in fostering an engaging and supportive learning environment for our students.

Warm regards,

John J Decker



**Junior
Achievement**[™]
of South Dakota

Celebrating Our Junior Achievement Volunteers

We are excited to welcome Junior Achievement (JA) volunteers back into our classrooms again this spring! These dedicated community members bring learning to life by pairing JA's hands-on curriculum with their own real-world experiences. Through engaging lessons on careers, financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and ethical decision-making, JA volunteers help students understand how the skills they practice in school connect to future opportunities.

Junior Achievement continues to be a powerful source of inspiration for young people. During the 2025-26 school year, over 2,000 volunteers across South Dakota are sharing their time and talents to support more than 50,000 students. Their commitment helps spark curiosity, build confidence, and encourage students to imagine what their futures could hold. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the volunteers and teachers listed below for their involvement with JA this year. Their willingness to invest in our students makes a meaningful and lasting difference.

If you're interested in volunteering, or if you'd like to sponsor a student for just \$25, please contact the JA office at (605) 336-7318 or jasd@ja.org. Your support helps empower the next generation of leaders, innovators, and community builders.

Grade	Teacher	JA Volunteer	Employer
2	Sydney Johnson	Kerry Stager	Lake Area Technical College
2	Chandler Nelson	Molly Heaton	Twin City Die Castings Co.
2	Jessica Stemwedel	Jen Hanson	PREMIER Bankcard
		Sally Kranz	PREMIER Bankcard
3	Heidi Stoick	Dave Eickmeyer	Benchmark Foam, Inc.
3	Abby Turbak	Amberly Kranz	First Bank & Trust
		Piper Gear	Plains Commerce Bank
3	Nicole Deutsch	Dani Hinkelman	Real Estate Professionals
		Melody Kerkvliet	Real Estate Professionals
3	Kylie Weber	Lindsey Jungers	Jungers Farms Butchery
4	Emily Hogue	Laurie Johnson	Farm Credit Services of America
4	Kristi Wietzema	Melissa Meidinger	Small Business Development Center
4	Kim Gilmour	Tammy Davis	Wurth Electronics Midcom Inc.
4	Chelsey Butler	James Boyd	New York Life Insurance



SCHOLASTIC BOOK OF THE MONTH

Pig the Pug: Cranky Pug

Pig is back, and he's experiencing all these new emotions. Is he happy, sad, or just cranky? The laughter is non-stop in this picture book as everyone's favorite pug sorts out his feelings.



SUMMER MATH & READING FUN!

Keep Learning Going All Summer!

In partnership with Watertown Park & Rec, Watertown School District, Watertown Regional Library & Boys & Girls Club of Watertown

READING SESSIONS	MATH SESSIONS
Session 1: June 2	• Session 1: June 3
Session 2: June 16	• Session 2: June 17
Session 3: July 7	• Session 3: July 8
Session 4: July 14	• Session 4: July 15

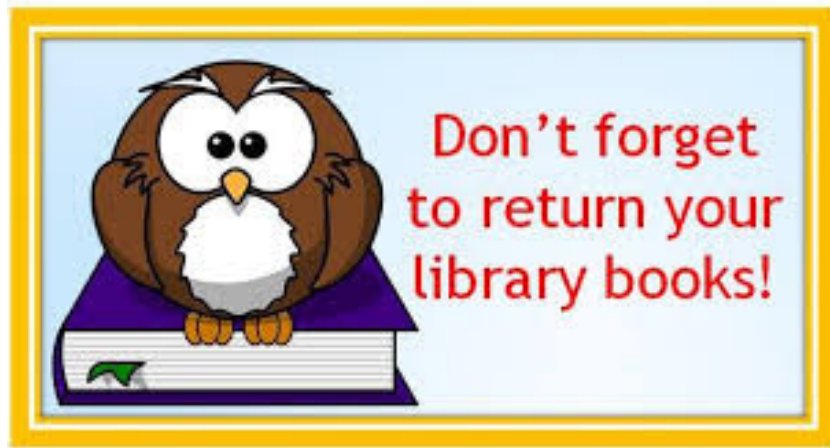
• 1st Grade: 9:30 – 10:15 AM
• 2nd Grade: 10:30 – 11:15 AM
• 3rd Grade: 11:30 AM – 12:15 PM
• 4th Grade: 12:30 – 1:15 PM
— Entering Grades 1-4 —

LOCATION
Watertown Regional Library

COST
FREE!
Limited to 45 Participants

REGISTER ONLINE!
• Sign up for each session individually
— Registration Opens **May 1** —
watertownparkandrec.com

LEARN & HAVE FUN ALL SUMMER LONG!



Please turn in all library books.

May 6th – 8th: last week to check out for those classes.

Books are due back on May 13th and 15th.

May 11th and 12th: last week to check out for those classes.

Books are due back on May 18th and 19th.

If your child forgets their books at home, please bring them back anytime before May 20th. Thanks!

April 27th - May 8th

Connecting With Others

- 1. Look around**
- 2. Notice someone you'd like to get to know**
- 3. Be accepting in all ways: eyes, body, and voice**
- 4. Include or join in if appropriate**



May 11th - May 23rd

Giving Compliments

- 1. Look at the person**
- 2. Smile**
- 3. Speak clearly and enthusiastically**
- 4. Tell the person exactly what you like**



Report to **PARENTS**

Make Summer Learning a Family Affair

School's out for summer, but that doesn't mean learning has to stop. Summer break is the perfect time for families to incorporate lessons into daily activities—and even vacations—to keep kids engaged and their minds active. These fun, brain-friendly activities are a great place to start.

Set Expectations

Tell your child that reading and learning activities will be an important part of their summer, but make sure they know they'll still have lots of time for play.

Create Mini Lessons

Everyday activities make great learning opportunities. Have kids count change, write a shopping list, or calculate a recipe's measurements.

Encourage Creative Writing

Have your child keep a summer journal, write letters to family members or friends, or start a family cookbook with your favorite recipes, instructions, and shopping lists.

Read Daily

Set aside at least 15 minutes a day for your entire family to read. (That means parents, too!) Organize a summer read-a-thon with goals for each family member, or sign your child up for your library's summer book club.

Let Them Play

Schools often use playful learning in the classroom. To boost playful learning at home, encourage kids to play matching or guessing games or solve puzzles. Go for



a walk and have them look for shapes in the neighborhood buildings or playground equipment or hunt for letters or words around town. Setting up a restaurant or a shop is full of learning opportunities for kids, too.

Travel Around the Globe— Virtually

Have an international evening where you cook a meal with recipes from a different country. Learn basic words in that country's language. Find the country on a map, and read a book or an article about what life is like there.

Learn During Family Trips

On vacation, stop at zoos, children's museums, or historic sites. Have your child help you plot out the trip using maps and keep a journal along the way. Older kids can tally up miles, keep track of expenses, or compute gas mileage.

Report
to **PARENTS**

How to Spark a Summer Reading Adventure

Encouraging summer reading is a great way to keep kids' minds active and foster a lifelong love of books. Follow these steps to make reading fun and engaging for your children this summer.

Sign Up for Library Summer Reading Programs

Visit your library's website or stop by to learn about their summer reading offerings. Most programs are free to join and allow kids to track the books they read, often with prizes for reaching milestones.

Let Kids Choose Their Own Books

Encourage your child to choose books on topics they're passionate about, whether that's sports, animals, or fantasy worlds. The goal is to associate reading with enjoyment. You can always suggest more challenging books as supplementary reading, but let their interests guide their main selections.

Create a Cozy Reading Nook

Choose a quiet corner of your home and add some soft pillows, blankets, and good lighting. Let your child help decorate the space to make it feel personal. Consider adding a small bookshelf or basket to keep current reads easily accessible. A comfy chair, beanbag, or even a tent can make the nook extra inviting.

Read Aloud Together

Set aside time each day to read aloud with your child, even if they're capable of reading independently. Choose books slightly above their reading level to expose them to new vocabulary and more complex stories. Take turns reading pages to make it interactive and fun.

Explore Audiobooks

Introduce your kids to the world of audiobooks, which can be enjoyed during car rides, while doing chores, or before bedtime. Many libraries



offer free audiobook rentals. Audiobooks can help improve listening skills, expand vocabulary, and make complex stories more accessible.

Make Regular Library Visits

Let trips to the library be fun outings where your child can explore different sections, attend story times or workshops, and choose books to bring home. Encourage them to talk with librarians, who can offer recommendations based on their interests and reading level.

Set Reading Goals and Rewards

Work with your child to set achievable reading goals. This could be a certain number of books, pages, or minutes read per week. Create a chart to track progress visually. Offer small rewards for reaching milestones, such as a special outing, extra screen time, or a new book. Be sure to celebrate their efforts and progress, not just the end results.

Incorporate Technology Thoughtfully

Explore e-readers or reading apps that might appeal to tech-savvy kids. Many of these offer interactive features, built-in dictionaries, and adjustable text sizes that can be helpful. However, balance screen reading with physical books to maintain a connection with traditional formats. Consider apps that gamify the reading experience with badges or avatars.



Counselor's Corner with Mrs. Flemming



Celebrating Growth & Getting Ready for Summer



As we approach the end of another school year, it's a wonderful time to pause and reflect on just how much our students have grown—academically, socially, and emotionally. Each child has made meaningful progress, whether it's learning new skills, building friendships, showing kindness, or developing resilience through challenges. Growth doesn't always look the same for every child. For some, it's raising their hand more in class. For others, it's managing big emotions, trying something new, or showing empathy to a classmate.

Take a moment to talk with your child about how much they have changed since August.

- * What is something that used to be hard for you that is easier now?
- * How did you show kindness to a friend this year?
- * What is one mistake you made that actually helped you learn something new?

Self-reflection helps children build confidence and recognize that their hard work really does pay off!

What We've Learned This Year

Throughout the year, students have been practicing important life skills such as: understanding and managing emotions, problem-solving and making responsible choices, showing kindness, empathy, and respect, and building confidence and perseverance.

These are skills that extend far beyond the classroom and will continue to support them throughout their lives.

Looking Ahead to Summer

Summer is a time for rest, fun, and connection—as well as a great opportunity to continue nurturing your child's growth. Here are a few ways to support your child over the summer:

1. Keep Routines Flexible but Consistent: While summer schedules may be more relaxed, maintaining some structure (like consistent bedtimes or daily responsibilities) helps children feel secure.

2. Encourage Independence: Give your child opportunities to make choices, solve small problems, and take on age-appropriate responsibilities. This builds confidence and life skills.

PARENT RESOURCES



[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/
PROFILE.PHP?ID=61556781784403](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61556781784403)



[HTTPS://SDSFEC.ORG/](https://sdsfec.org/)



[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/
GROUPS/781453261913514](https://www.facebook.com/groups/781453261913514)



[PARENTGUIDANCE.ORG](https://parentguidance.org)



[HTTPS://WWW.PBS.ORG/
PARENTS](https://www.pbs.org/parents)



[HTTPS://
CODINGTONCONNECTS.COM/](https://codingtonconnects.com/)



[HTTPS://SAFE2SAY.SD.GOV](https://safe2say.sd.gov)

APRIL 2026

MENU IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

FRUIT AND MILK IS OFFERED AT ALL BREAKFAST MEALS

VEGGIE BAR, FRUIT SELECTION AND MILK SELECTION ARE OFFERED AT ALL LUNCH MEALS.

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
		<p style="text-align: right;">1 WEEK 4</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> PANCAKE STICK 17G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> BREADED CHICKEN SANDWICH 44G BAKED BEANS 30G</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">2</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> FRENCH TOAST 37G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> CHICKEN CUBES/GRAVY 70G MASHED POTATOES 20G DINNER ROLL 23G</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NO SCHOOL</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Good Friday</i></p>
<p style="text-align: right;">6 WEEK 5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NO SCHOOL</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EASTER MONDAY</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">7</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> F. TOAST STICKS 38G SAUSAGE PATTY <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> CHICKEN <u>OR</u> CHEESE QUESIDILLA 33G FIESTA BEANS 17G</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">8</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> BAGEL 31G <u>OR</u> BURRITO 29G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> ORANGE CHICKEN 26G FRIED RICE 27G FRUIT CUP 21G</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">9</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> PANCAKE MINI 31G/MAX 36G OMELET 13G/26G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> CHICKEN TENDERS 12G/18G MASHED POT. 20G GRAVY 4G DINNER ROLL 23G</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">10</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> BREAD LOAF 34G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> MAC & CHEESE 22G GREEN BEANS 4G GARLIC TOAST 12G</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">13 WEEK 6</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> APPLE OR CHERRY FRUDEL 38G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> HOT HAM & CHEESE 29G BAKED BEANS 30G</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">14</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> FUNNEL CAKE 38G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> TACO PIZZA 28G FRUIT CUP 21G</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">15</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> BKFST SANDWICH (B)24G/(C)34G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> CHICKEN NUGGETS K-4 DRUMSTICKS 6G 5-12 WEDGES 20G BISCUITS 24G</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">16</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> MINI BAGELS 42G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> PANCAKE 13G/26G H.B. PATTY 15G SAUSAGE PATTY</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">17</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> OATMEAL ROUND 39G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> LASGANA ROLLUP 22G MIXED VEGGIES 12G PLAIN BREADSTICK 14G</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">20 WEEK 1</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> CEREAL 23G YOGURT CUP 15G M.S/H.S. VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> BURGER 28G BAKED BEANS 30G</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">21</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> FRENCH TOAST MINIS 36G/37G M.S/H.S. VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> SOFTSHELL TACO 12G/23G CILANTRO LIME RICE 19G</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">22</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> BENEFIT BARS 47G M.S/H.S. VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> CHICKEN TENDERS 12G/18G CARROTS 5G</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">23</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> CINNAMON ROLL 17G M.S/H.S. VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> GOULASH 52G CORN 17G DINNER ROLL 23G</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">24</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> MUFFIN 29G-31G M.S/H.S. VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> PIZZA 26G GREEN BEANS 4G</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">27 WEEK 2</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> CERAL BAR 29G STRING CHEESE M.S/H.S. VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> RIB PATTY SANDWICH 28G BAKED BEANS 30G</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">28</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> MINI DONUTS 20G-41G YOGURT CUP 15G M.S/H.S. VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> WALKING TACO 22G/30G FR. FR. CUP 21G</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">29</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> BREAK. BITES 20G M.S/H.S. VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> CHICKEN NUGGETS 13G/16G CURLY FRIES 23G SNACK 15-32G</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">30</p> <p><u>BREAKFAST:</u> WAFFLE STIX 28-37G M.S/H.S. VARIETY ITEMS <u>LUNCH:</u> CHILI 10G CIN. ROLL 33G APPLESAUCE CUP 14G STRING CHEESE 1G</p>	