

JEFFERSON JOURNAL

OCTOBER 2026

- **2nd**- Homecoming
(dismissal at 1:20 pm)
- **6th**- PTO meeting at 4:15 pm
- **12th**- Native American Day (no school)
- **14th**- Picture Retake Day
- **28th** - Early dismissal at 12:20 pm for Inservice

MR. DECKER'S NOTES

Our initial results from last year's South Dakota Assessment for grades 3-4, have come back to review. Overall our kids were 60% Proficient/Advanced in math. Students were 49% P/A in reading.

Our percentage in reading was below the state and district average. Students do so much reading in school, but more is needed. Times have changed. Kids are busier. Priorities have changed too. Every occupation I know of is going to require some sort of reading. Setting aside just 15 minutes a night to read catapults a child's ability to read fluently and comprehend. What can you do to provide an opportunity for your child to read better and be more successful in life?



MR. DECKER'S NOTES

This same report indicated that we had 8% of our students chronically absent. This was doubled from the year before. You are considered chronically absent if you miss two or more days from school a month or over 18 days for the year. You as a parent can excuse your child, HOWEVER, you are also responsible by law to have your child in school. As a parent you are provided ten PEA days (Parent Excusing Absence). That is two weeks. Anything beyond that is still recorded as AU (Absent Unexcused) as you are now in a concerning number of days absent. Anything that a parent excused for medical reason and accompanied by a note will be recorded as AE (Absent Excused). Attendance letters are issued, based on PEA and AU days, as shared concern of missed academic time. The lessons teachers teach cannot be replicated at home. You do not have the resources that we utilize.

If you have any questions regarding attendance, please call the school, 882-6390. I would love to discuss the value and importance of how attendance impacts the future of each child and ensures their success. Thanks for cooperating!

90% ATTENDANCE

We are adding a new incentive this year for our students to achieve. At the end of each quarter, we will calculate their attendance percentage and if they are above 90% they will receive a magnet to take home. Studies have shown that when students are in school over 90% of the school year, they achieve greater. That means missing fewer than 18 days the entire school year. We are hoping that we can do even better than that. Our yearly average per student is approximately 97%.

It also sets good habits for life. ATTENDANCE MATTERS!

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. September's winner were:

1st- Mrs. Swenson

2nd- Mrs. Johnson

3rd- Mrs. Weber/ Ms. Freese with 99.17%! They get donuts.

4th- Mrs. Hogue

MR. DECKER'S NOTES

Safety Protocols

Safety is a **Priority** for all of our schools. We ask that whenever you come to our school you buzz in at the east entry door. Please report to the office to receive a sticker if planning to stay or to take care of business.

Each year schools are required to practice safety drills. We practice fire, lockdown, and tornado drills throughout the year. Teachers review the plan within their classroom as to what they would do and where they would go. Fire and tornado drills have an alarm or outside siren to indicate the emergency.

If there is a cause for alarm within the building, an announcement is made over the intercom stating which Safety Protocol we are in. Here are the four protocols:

HOLD- there may be a medical emergency in an area or a behavior that needs to be dealt with. Teachers clear the hall, continue teaching, close and lock the door, business as usual until all clear is announced.

SECURE- there may be a threat or hazard outside of the building. All outside doors are locked with no one allowed in. Business as usual inside the building.

LOCKDOWN- is called when there is a threat within the building-students remain in the classroom out of sight with doors locked.

EVACUATE- this is used when we need to move staff and students to another location. For example; a fire drill.

Sincerely,

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

NURSE NOTES

Should Student stay home or go home?

Stay in school:

- Cold symptoms without a fever
- Cough without a fever
- Diarrhea without a fever
- Head Lice up to the Nurse/Principal will decide
- Pink eye unless a dr note states differently
- Rash unless it is oozing or a fever

Go home:

- Fever of 100 or more
- Vomitting

**** These symptoms are not absolute indicators. Discretion will also be used when determining whether a student should remain in class or be sent home.**

PEANUT SAFE SCHOOL

We are a Peanut Safe facility. This means that we do NOT serve anything with peanuts due to the vast number of students with some type of peanut allergy ranging from minor to life-threatening. We cannot control what students may bring for lunch, but we do ask that if your child/children only eat Peanut Butter sandwiches, please make the teacher aware, so if any classmates are allergic to peanuts, we can make sure they are placed safely apart. We also ask that if you bring treats for the class, to be mindful of any fellow classmates that may have an allergy and choose something peanut free. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Ann, the school nurse at Jefferson.



Kids Hope USA (KHUSA) is a national organization that equips churches to serve their local public elementary schools by providing positive adults to serve as mentors. Because KHUSA mentors are trained to respect the separation of church and state, these programs are welcomed in hundreds of districts across the country. KHUSA currently supports over 1,000 programs in the US... including our 3 elementary schools here in Watertown.

The motto of Kids Hope USA is the POWER of ONE... to build caring, life-changing relationships between one student, one mentor, for one hour each week. The mentors spend one hour per week talking, reading, playing, and listening to a child at school. Research shows that by helping a child feel loved and valued, the child can better learn, grow, and succeed. Jefferson Elementary is proud to be a Kids Hope USA school!



REPORT TO PARENTS: BENEFITS OF READING 15 MINUTES A DAY

Encouraging children to read at home—even for just 15 minutes a day—is one of the most powerful ways parents can support students' learning.

- 1** Create a "to-read" list that your child can check off.
- 2** The topic doesn't matter, as long as your child's reading.
- 3** Read as a family—taking turns reading passages.
- 4** During reading time, put away electronic devices.
- 5** Ask open-ended questions about your child's books.
- 6** Make it a habit with routine read-aloud sessions.

POP TABS

Your child should have brought home a note explaining the changes in the Ronald McDonald Pop Tab Program. They should have also brought home a POP TAB house to fill and return to school as many times throughout the year. Once they bring it to school they will dump it in our large container, keep the house, and receive a coupon for a free ice cream coupon from McDonalds. The act of giving and generosity to help others is the lesson learned.



SCHOLASTIC BOOK OF THE MONTH

Sophie the Hero by Lara Bergen

Sophie is positive that she's discovered her perfect name this time, Sophie the Hero. After all, she already proved herself worthy of the title. When her little neighbor ran out in front of a car, Sophie came to the rescue just in time. But being a hero might be tougher than this third-grader expected. She's supposed to save the day - not cause more trouble! Could Sophie's latest name be a heroic flop?





(September 28th- October 9th).

Accepting "No" for an Answer

1. Look at the person
2. Say "Okay"
3. Stay calm
4. If you disagree, ask later

(October 13th- October 23rd)



BOYS TOWN.
SKILL OF THE WEEK

GREETING OTHERS

- LOOK AT THE PERSON
- USE A PLEASANT VOICE
- SAY 'HI' OR 'HELLO'

Jefferson School Library

Dear Parents,

Reading is one for the most important skills your child will learn in school. Like all skills, improvement comes with practice, and the Jefferson School Library provides a wide variety of books for students to borrow for reading practice, information, and enjoyment. Your student's class will visit the school library weekly to select books. You can help your student by reading to or with him/her and asking questions about the story. Encourage your child to spend time reading at home every day.

- ☒ Students are responsible to handle library books with care, since they are for everyone to share. Please keep books away from pets, food, and all liquids.
- ☒ Any book damage should be reported to the library as soon as possible so we can attempt repairs.
- ☒ If a book is lost or damaged, payment toward a replacement will be requested from the parents.
- ☒ If your family plans to move, please return all books before moving.

We hope your children will read and enjoy many books and grow in reading skills while attending our school.



Picture Retakes

Oct 14th

8:00- 9:00 am

You must bring in your picture packet.



PICTURE RETAKE DAY!

Bullying Prevention 101

A quick guide for elementary school students



WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is when someone:

- is hurt by unwanted words or actions,
- usually more than once, and
- has a hard time stopping what is happening to them.

WHERE AND WHEN DOES BULLYING HAPPEN?

Bullying can happen anywhere, anytime. It can occur in your neighborhood, on your way to and from school, at school, and while online.

WHAT IS CYBERBULLYING?

Using **technology**, such as email, texts, social media, online gaming, or pictures to hurt or harm someone else with unwanted, aggressive, and repeated behavior.



WHO IS INVOLVED?

TARGET ➡ Person who is being bullied

STUDENT WHO BULLIES ➡ Person whose actions cause hurt or harm

WITNESS OR BYSTANDER ➡ Person who sees or knows of the behavior

Note: "Person" may mean one individual or a group of people.

A person can have more than just one role!
The role that any student plays in a bullying situation can change.

Report to PARENTS

Executive Function FAQs

Executive function is a set of skills that help your child make plans, control behavior, and set goals. Your child's growing brain, as Harvard University's Center on the Developing Child describes it, is like a busy airport, and executive function is its air-traffic control system. It allows a child to focus on an activity, remember details, and manage their time—all critical tasks for success in school.

The 7 essential executive function skills children need, according to researcher and author Ellen Galinsky, are:

- Focus and self-control;
- Perspective taking;
- Communicating;
- Making connections;
- Critical thinking;
- Taking on challenges; and
- Self-directed, engaged learning.

Read on for answers to common questions about these skills.

How can I tell if my child struggles with executive function?

Since executive function involves a set of skills, there is no single test to identify executive function problems. Generally, a child may have executive function weakness if she or he has trouble:

- Planning projects and staying organized;
- Telling stories verbally or in writing;
- Retaining information while using it (remembering a phone number while dialing, for instance);
- Estimating how much time a task will take; or
- Memorizing and retrieving information from memory.

Are executive function problems a learning disability? No. But many people with learning disabilities tend to struggle with executive function. Individuals with ADHD, autism, or other behavioral disorders might have trouble with executive function, as well.

If my child is struggling with executive function, what are my first steps to address it? Consider which skills seem to present the biggest problems for your child. Contact your child's teachers and principal to discuss how these issues may be impacting his or her school performance. Together, you can devise school and home-based strategies.

Is my sixth-grader too old to strengthen his or her executive function skills? No! Though a child begins to



develop executive function skills in infancy, his or her brain continues to develop through adolescence and into adulthood. It is never too late to help your child develop skills and processes to support learning.

How can I reinforce good executive function skills at home?

One of the simplest—and most fun!—is to play games. Simon Says, for instance, teaches learners to follow instructions; storytelling games boost communication; what-if and imaginative games challenge children to consider new perspectives; and memory games help children retrieve information.

How can I help my child complete schoolwork? Make a checklist for navigating assignments. For a child struggling with executive function skills, the steps necessary to complete a task might not be clear. Define them specifically. For instance: get out pencil and paper; put name on paper; read directions, etc. Encourage your child to write the due date at the top of each assignment as a visual reminder. At home, make a visual calendar with deadlines for projects.

Web Resources

Visit the **National Center for Learning Disabilities** for articles on managing executive function and learning disabilities.

www.ncld.org/types-learning-disabilities/executive-function-disorders

The **Child Mind Institute's** executive function hot topic page examines interventions and supports for struggling students.

www.childmind.org/en/hot-topics/executive-functions

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)



TO: Parents of ALL students ATTENDING A TITLE I SCHOOL

FR: Emily Hatton

RE: Parents' Right to Know

In accordance with Title I Part A, Section 1111 (h)(6), this is to notify you that, as a parent of a student attending a Title I school, you may request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teachers. The Watertown School District will provide a response to the parent's request in a timely manner.

The information provided to parents will include the following:

1. Whether any teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade level and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction,
2. Whether any teacher is teaching under an "Authority to Act" status,
3. The baccalaureate degree or major of the degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree,
4. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

Parents may also request information on the level of achievement of their child in each of the state academic assessments. The Watertown School District will give parents timely notice that their child has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

Any parent wishing to obtain information regarding the qualifications of their child's teacher may direct inquiries to the building principal.

All inquiries regarding achievement information on your child can also be obtained by contacting your child's building principal.

OCTOBER 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

WEEK 5



BREAKFAST: 1
BB MINI PANCAKE ?G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
CHICKEN TENDERS 12G/18G
MASHED POT/GRAVY 24G
DINNER ROLL 23G
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

BREAKFAST: 2
BREAD LOAF 34G
YOGURT CUP 15G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
TALIAN DUNKERS 34G/51G
MARINARA CUP 7G
CORN 17G
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

WEEK 6

BREAKFAST: 5
FRUDEL 38G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
MINI CORN DOGS 20G/30G
MAC & CHEESE ?G
FR. FRUIT CUP 21G
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

BREAKFAST: 6
FRENCH TOAST 37G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
QUESIDILLA 33G
FIESTA BEANS 17G
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

BREAKFAST: 7
BREAKFAST SAND. 24G/34G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
CHICKEN DRUMMIES 6G
CHICKEN NUGGETS 13G/16G
WEDGES 20G/BISCUIT 24G
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

BREAKFAST: 8
STR. MINI BAGEL 42G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
WAFFLES ?G
SAUSAGE LINKS 4G
JUICE CUP 15G
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

BREAKFAST: 9
BANANA MUFFIN 31G
STRING CHEESE 15G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
SPAGHETTI 36G
GREEN BEANS 4G
GARLIC TOAST 24G
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

WEEK 1

NO SCHOOL 12



BREAKFAST: 13
FUNNEL CAKE 38G
YOGURT CUP 15G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
MACHO NACHOS 19G/30G
REFRIED BEANS 36G
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

BREAKFAST: 14
BREAKFAST BAGEL
PIZZA 31G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
CARNIVAL CORN DOG
BAKED BEANS 30G
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

BREAKFAST: 15
CINNAMON ROLL 33G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
ACROBAT ALFREDO 12G/26G
BROCCOLI 5G
GARLIC BREADSTICK 14G
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

BREAKFAST: 16
MAGIC MUFFIN 30G
STRING CHEESE 15G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
CHEESY WHEEL OF FORTUNE 30G
GREEN BEANS 4G
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

WEEK 2

BREAKFAST: 19
BREAD SLICE 44G
GOGURT 8G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
GRILLED CHICKEN SAND. 28G
BAKED BEANS 30G
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

BREAKFAST: 20
MINI DONUTS 20G
STRING CHEESE 15G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
WALKING TACO 22G/30G
FR. FRUIT CUP 21G
SNACK
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

BREAKFAST: 21
BREAK. BITES 20G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
CHICKEN NUGGETS 13G/16G
CURLY FRIES 23G
SNACK
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

BREAKFAST: 22
WAFFLES 37G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
CHILI 10G
CIN. ROLL 33G
STRING CHEESE 15G
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

BREAKFAST: 23
DONUT HOLES ?G
YOGURT CUP 15G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
LASAGNA ROLL UP 22G/42G
MIXED VEGGIES 12G
PLAIN BREADSTICK 14G
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

WEEK 3

BREAKFAST: 26
CINI MINI 41G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
CHICKEN TENDERS 12G/18G
CARROTS 5G
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

BREAKFAST: 27
MINI JOHN 13G
GOGURT 8G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
SOFT SHELL TACO 12G/23G
CILANTRO LIME RICE 19G
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

BREAKFAST: 28
BREAK. PIZZA 27G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
POPCORN CHICKEN 14G
MASHED POT/GRAVY 24G
DINNER ROLL 23G
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

BREAKFAST: 29
CRESCENT 38G
STRING CHEESE 15G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
FR. TOAST STIX 38G
SAUSAGE PATTY
HASHBROWN PATTY 15G
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK

BREAKFAST: 30
GLAZED PULL APART ?G
YOGURT CUP 15G
H.S./M.S.
VARIETY BREAKFAST
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE MILK
LUNCH:
GOULASH 52G
CORN 17G
DINNER ROLL 23G
CHOICE FRUIT
CHOICE VEGGIES
CHOICE MILK