



School District of Hillsboro

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TIGER NATION NEWS

April 2021

Curt Bisarek | Superintendent

Greetings Hillsboro Community. What a year it has been. One year ago we were in the early stages of an unprecedented change in education. Schools had been ordered closed and students and staff were transitioned into an online learning environment with little time to prepare for that transition. Thankfully with the support of a great team of community members, students, and staff we were able to develop an exceptional ReStart Plan for the 2020-21 school year. Contrary to many schools across the country, we were able to offer in-person instruction and most of our activities throughout the 2020-21 school year. The hard work and dedication of our staff has been exceptional during this time. As we approach Teacher Appreciation Week, please consider reaching out to our staff to offer them your support and encouragement as we approach the end of the 2020-21 school year.



The April 6, 2021 school board election resulted in the re-election of board members Denise Huntley and Jason Oetzman. Additionally, new member Josiah Woirol was elected. Josiah will fill the position of Jenni Schrock who did not seek re-election after serving the district as a board member since 2012. Please join me in thanking Jenni for her years of service to the District.

Throughout this year, the federal government has authorized funding for schools in three different Acts. Each Act (CARES, CAA, and most recently ARPA) has awarded different levels of funding to schools. The allocation of these funds is based on the Title I distribution formula. As a result, the School District of Hillsboro is receiving very favorable amounts of these funds. The intention is that these funds will be utilized to plan, prepare or prevent a pandemic. Thus far we have been using the first round of funding (CARES) to purchase equipment and materials for our custodial team to enhance our cleaning and disinfection processes. Additionally, we have used the funds to expand the instructional and mental health support we are able to offer our students and staff as well as purchase materials that support a variety of services we provide.

We are currently gathering information and pricing for a number of additional services and improvements to be purchased using the 2nd and 3rd rounds of funding (CAA and ARPA). As we move forward, please know that we are prioritizing these funds to provide the greatest benefit to our students, staff, and community. Over the next several weeks we will be developing options to present to our school board. We will continue to make sure that the use of these funds will continue to expand on our "Learn, Achieve, Succeed" mission. One of the areas in which we are planning to use portions of these federal funds is in addressing long-discussed improvements in our outdoor spaces. The board voted to pursue bids for creating restroom spaces adjacent to our concession area near the football field/track as well as the resurfacing of our asphalt track and addressing the drainage of the football field. These projects will only utilize a portion of these federal funds with additional purchases and projects still being developed. We will share information on future plans for the federal funds as decisions are made.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Curt Bisarek

HILLSBORO SOPHOMORES, JUNIORS AND SENIORS COMPLETED TEEN MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING

Linda Bisarek | Interventionist/Instructional Coach

Students in grades 10-12 at Hillsboro High School recently completed teen Mental Health First Aid training. This training teaches high school students how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders among their friends and peers. The training gives students the skills to have supportive conversations with their friends and get a responsible and trusted adult to take over as necessary.



Jamie Gates and Daniel Faas were the primary instructors for this program.

They received special training and certification last summer to teach the course by Mental Health First Aid USA at the National Council for Behavioral Health. School Counselor, Kelli Sullivan, along with Alyssa Sherwood, MSW, from Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinic supported our two instructors.

To even qualify to provide this training to our students, Hillsboro was required to have at least 10% of our adult staff trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid.

Moving forward, all sophomores will be trained yearly in teen Mental Health First Aid. We are proud to continue to make mental health a priority in our district.



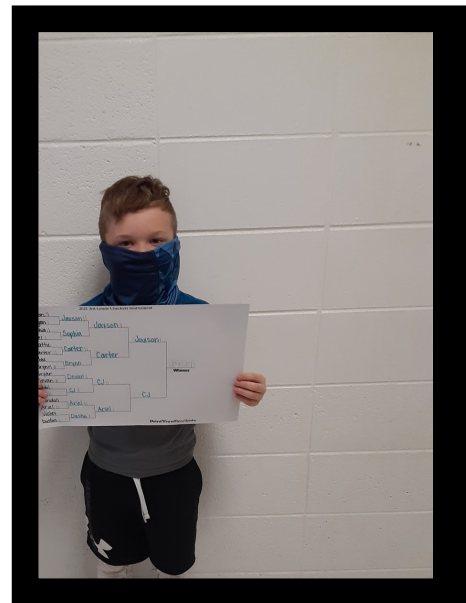
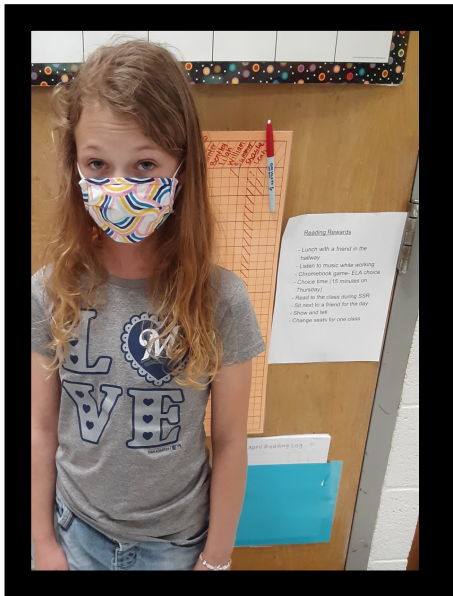
teen
MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID® USA

CHECKERS TOURNAMENT

Mrs. Thayer and Mrs. Ross | Third Grade

The third grade classes have once again been playing the annual checkers tournament, a tradition that has been passed down through the years. Each year as February rolls around, we begin to teach the 3rd grade students the rules of Checkers. Excitement fills our classrooms as they develop strategies, learn how to counter moves, and prepare for the tournament. Each class sets up their bracket and plays for champion of the class. The two champs face off and the winner takes on the principal! The winner of that match is the Champion of the Elementary School!

This year we have Leah Thayer from Mrs. Ross' class and Jaxon Oetzman from Mrs. Thayer's class facing off.



MUSIC DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Mrs. Parker and Mr. Bartsch | MS/HS Music Department

We have very fortunately been able to begin resuming music performances again. Thank you to those that were able to attend our HS and MS concerts, or caught the livestream to support these hard working musicians.



Our next concerts will be as follows:

Tuesday, May 11th 7:30 pm 8th Grade & HS Choir/HS Band Fine Arts Concert

Thursday, May 13th 7:00 pm 6th Grade Choir and Band/7th Grade Band Concert

Many students also participated in the Wisconsin School Music Association's Solo and Ensemble Event virtually this year. Their growth and resilience through this year has been incredible.

Congratulations to all participants! An additional congratulations to the students who are advancing their events to State Solo and Ensemble:

Antonio Marquez-Velazquez- Alto Saxophone Solo

Marquez-Velazquez/Fuchs- Instrumental Duet

Nathan Fuchs- Trumpet Solo

Erich Mobley-Theatrical Solo

Ade Wood-Theatrical Solo

Billy Filler- Vocal Solo

Haylee Fry- Vocal Solo

Grace Holthe- Vocal Solo

Filler/Mobley- Vocal Duet

SATB Quartet

Madrigal

COACH POLK HAS FIRST SEASON UNDER BELT

Mitch Huntley| HHS Senior

With a Regional Championship loss to conference rival, the Necedah Cardinals, the Hillsboro Boys' basketball team ended their season with a record of 8-14 in coach Jordan Polk's first year. Necedah had bested Hillsboro twice in the regular season, and had home court advantage for the Regional Championship, winning with a final score of 46-68. Necedah earned the number one seed in their six team regional, while Hillsboro had the two seed. Hillsboro beat Pittsville in the Regional Semi-final game at home by 11, which advanced them on to play Necedah.



Three players earned all-conference awards for the tigers. Juniors Jordan Erickson and Payten Strohmeyer were named to the Scenic Bluffs All-Conference Honorable Mention team. Erickson led the team in total points(188) and free throw percentage(67%). Strohmeyer led the team in rebounds(6.4 per game), blocks(1.6 per game), and field goal percentage(64%). Senior captain Mitch Huntley was named to the conference's All-Sportsmanship team, along with Sam Wittmershaus(Bangor), Hayden Thompson(Brookwood), James Harter(Cashton), Mekhi Baradji(Necedah), Ethan Dvorak(New Lisbon), Max Benish(Royall), and Brett Mildbrand(Wonewoc-Center). Huntley finished the year averaging 7.1 points and 5.8 rebounds.

Hillsboro will return three out of their five starters, Jordan Erickson, Payten Strohmeyer, and Kasen Bloor. They will also retain key contributors off the bench, Junior Hayden Stahlke, Sophomore Noah Burmaster, and Freshman Isaiah Stokes. The tigers will look to take huge leaps next year with their experienced roster under coaches Jordan Polk, Ethan Knowler, Jacob Marshall, and Bruce Borchardt.



MUSIC WITH MASKS

Erich Mobley | HHS Junior

When you think of a high school music concert, you probably think of forty plus kids standing shoulder to shoulder on risers singing their hearts out. Or, maybe you think of a group of students playing instruments next to each other at full blast during pep band before an athletic event. I can assure you that isn't happening. Choir and band look different this year due to the virus, but that hasn't stopped the music department from putting on some very good shows.



At the beginning of the year when the weather was still nice, the music department could go outside to practice and they could socially distance enough to not have to wear masks to sing or play. Once the weather cooled down and we hit yellow status, we were not able to sing much at all because of the lack of people in the classroom.

Once our first concert came around at Christmas time, we could not have any spectators at our concert. We all stood six or more feet apart to make sure that we could sing. Our choir took up almost the entire gym with all of us spaced out. The band was not very much different from normal besides the fact that all of the wind instruments had to wear a mask over the bell of their instruments. We also sat further apart than normal.

By the time that our second concert came around we had the chance to have two spectators per family. This helped a ton with being able to hear applause and sing to someone besides the camera. The music department hopes to move back to normal next year and get back to being the best possible music department we can be.



TESTING YOUR LIMITS

Sierra Siefert | HHS Junior

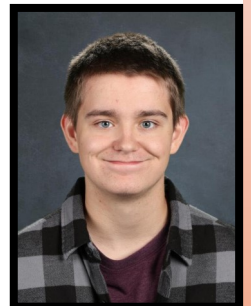
After lots of waiting and plenty of build up, March 9th was the date all juniors had been waiting for. Luckily, with everything that has been rescheduled this year, the ACTs remained on schedule. Usually the ACT is a large part of what colleges are looking at on your college transcripts. However, in response to the pandemic, colleges announced that they would not consider SAT or ACT scores as part of the admissions process for students applying for entry in Fall 2021 and 2022. Even though we lost a crucial part of learning during the shut down, taking the ACTs is still essential. In order to prepare, the junior class used tiger time on Wednesdays to watch ACT preparation videos made by Mike Barret. After all preparations, at 8 AM Tuesday, March 9th, all juniors were loaded onto a bus to be transported to the community center downtown to take the exam. They are happy to have it behind them.



RETURNING TO NORMALCY

Niles Hammer | HHS Junior

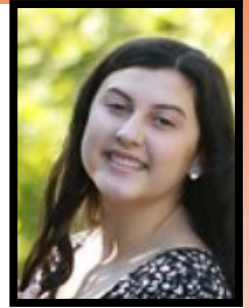
The halls of Hillsboro High School filled with students after the Hillsboro School District transitioned to “Green Phase” in January after being in “Yellow Status” since October. This transition followed weeks of debate and speculation surrounding the safety of the transition. The Reopening Committee oversaw the transition, took into consideration Vernon County COVID-19 case numbers, and their own reopening guidelines. The School continues to require wearing masks, social distancing, enhanced cleaning practices, contact tracing, and quarantines. Teachers are loving having almost all of their students back in the classroom with the exception of students who have chosen to remain virtual. The school has only had one large group of students quarantined during the “Green Phase” with the Hillsboro Girls basketball team being quarantined after a few weeks into “Green Phase”. Hillsboro High School hopes to remain in “Green Phase” for the remainder of the year, but they are prepared to transition back into “Yellow Phase” if Vernon county cases of COVID-19 increase.



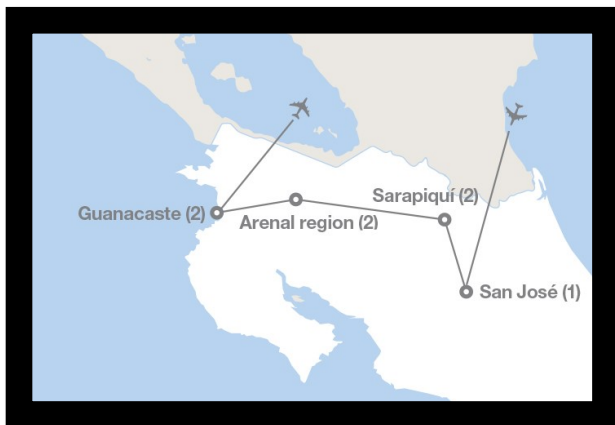
RESTRICTIONS ARE LIFTING

Lanaya Coblentz | HHS Senior

At the school board meeting on Monday, March 8, board members discussed possible solutions to prom and the Spanish Club's trip to Costa Rica. The juniors have been working hard on planning prom this year even though there was a chance that it may not happen. They were happy to find out that prom has been approved for April 24 in the high school gymnasium. The dance will start at 6pm and go through 10pm. All grades 9-12 will be able to go to the dance and bring a date with pre-approval.



The school board also approved the Costa Rica trip which was postponed from last June. Shannon Chute, the advisor for the Spanish Club, has been in contact with EF tours about restrictions and safety precautions so the trip can continue and be as safe as possible. Some precautions that they have to take are having a negative Covid test to get into Costa Rica and to get back into America. The club will also be going along with the Spanish Club from LaFarge. They will get to practice the Spanish language as well as experience the nature of Costa Rica by white water rafting, snorkeling, and ziplining over the Costa Rican mountains.



HEARTBREAKING END TO GIRLS' BASKETBALL SEASON

Malia Liska | HHS Junior

The Hillsboro Girls Basketball season came to an abrupt halt when their season ended due to the entire team getting quarantined via contact tracing. Although their season didn't end the way they wanted, the team finished their season strong with a record of 14-7. Despite the team getting quarantined in the middle of the season, they still managed to win a regional championship and were set to play Bangor in the sectional semi-final until they were notified they had to forfeit. Their mid-season quarantine did not however prevent them from practicing. They attended virtual practices everyday on a google meet to continue working toward their goals. The team also had several girls earn individual awards, as well as winning the regional championship. Junior, Malia Liska, and Sophomore, Kyra Bisarek, both received 2nd team all conference. Sophomore, Camryn Hansen, received all conference honorable mention, along with Senior, Grace Holthe, earning the all conference sportsmanship award.



HILLSBORO GETS A HEAD START ON SPRING SPORTS IN THE CONFERENCE

Megan Salisbury | HHS Senior

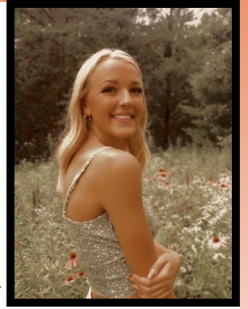
Because Hillsboro has already played their fall sports during the regular fall season, they get a head start on spring sports while the rest of the conference is currently playing football and volleyball.

The school board is allowing an unlimited number of spectators at spring sports events, while still practicing social distancing and mask wearing. Softball, baseball, track, and golf get to start having contact dates and captain practices almost six weeks earlier than the rest of the conference.

All seasons officially begin in mid-April.

This year will also be the first year softball players will get to use their brand new field.

The family of John Wanless kindly donated a generous amount to the making of the field on school grounds.



WRESTLERS FINISH SEASON WITH NO COVID INTERRUPTIONS

Haylee Fry | HHS Junior

Sixteen wrestlers competed during the 20-21 wrestling season coached by Brad Nugent and Dan Green with the help of managers Kenzie Krajco, Ade Wood and Chelsea Marty.

When faced with the challenges of COVID, head coach Coach Brad Nugent says this, “I think we had a great season. Being able to complete the season and not have any major Covid issues was huge. It shows the kids were doing the right things on and off the mat so they could compete. I think the sport of wrestling as a whole did a great job with its Covid protocols. We had some great seniors. Chris Heidtman, Camron Huntley, Casey McCoic, Rey Mora, Isac Sugden and Mac Verbsky, lead the way for us this year and some up-and-coming underclassmen that made some huge strides.”

Coach Nugent adds, “To take 2nd in the conference was huge for us and it gives those kids coming back next year a goal to strive for. We had an overall dual record of 5-3. We were able to have a conference tournament and have a conference champ, Mac Verbsky at 220, and multiple others took 2nd, like [Sophomore] Phillip Voltz at 132, [Junior] Hunter Osorio at 152, Chris Heidtman at 160, Casey McCoic at 182, and multiple 3rd place finishers, [Freshman] Ervin Novacheck at 126 and Rey Mora at 138. We were fortunate enough to send on four wrestlers, Chris Heidtman, Casey McCoic, Hunter Osorio, and Mac Verbsky onto Sectionals in Mineral Point.



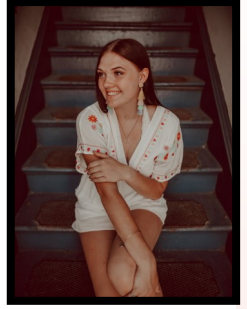
I couldn't be more proud of how they wrestled there. It was pretty huge for Chris and Casey to win the last high school matches of their careers and Mac put himself in a great position to make a push for state.” Senior to be, Hunter Osorio says, “Practice was just a constant grind. Everyone pushed each other pretty much as hard as we could. Plenty of people showed their absolute best in practice and everyone tried their hardest in matches which left everyone exhausted. We always tried to get the hype up. The tournaments to get to sectionals were also exciting. Everyone was supporting each other and trying to help somehow to get everyone to sectionals and even further.”

Coach Nugent states, “For one of the craziest seasons I've ever experienced, where the kids could have folded and blamed everything else in the world, I couldn't be more proud of our wrestlers. They fought hard this season and handled adversity head-on. This is a special group of kids and I'm fortunate that I got to coach them this year. I'm thankful for the support we received from our Administration, teachers, parents, and the community. Without that, this season doesn't happen. We are excited to keep building and we're moving in the right direction. Go Tigers!”

FBLA & FORENSICS

Grace Holthe | HHS Senior

January 2021 started off with our annual FBLA competitions. This year the Hillsboro High School FBLA consists of students ranging from Freshman to Seniors. Usually, the students have a choice between taking an online test at school in early January, a test at Regional Leadership Conference or a presentation they give to judges at Regionals. This year all tests and presentations were done online due to Covid precautions. The top 3 students/teams in each category move onto the State Leadership Conference that is being held virtually on April 12th. This year, we are happy to congratulate the following students on their accomplishments and wish them the best at State:



- Grace Holthe & Mitch Huntley (1st place - Social Media Presentation)
- Savannah Britzke (2nd place - Introduction to Financial Math)
- Carter Fry (1st place - Introduction to Information Technology)
- AJ McDonough (3rd place- Website Design)
- Tori Slama, Danae Gardner & Peyton Sullivan (3rd place - Introduction to Event Planning)

This years Forensics Team consisted of Greg Hora and Ni Schulz (Group Interpretation), Ella Burch and Malana Woirol (Group Interpretation), Tori Slama, Ade Wood, Kenzie Krajco, Shelby Brown (Group Interpretation), and Erich Mobley (Radio News Reporting). All entries were videos that were submitted for judging, except for radio news reporting, in which Erich competed live through videoconferencing.

The first round, sub-district, was in February. For our group interpretation category, students' entries were judged three times. For Erich's radio news reporting entries, he had to perform three five-minute radio news broadcasts. For all entries, at least one score had to be a 16 or higher to advance to District. All of our students advanced to District. Students polished their entries and submitted new videos for judging, or in Erich's case, he performed three more virtual rounds. At least one of their three scores had to be a 21 or higher to advance to the State level.

We are proud to say all of our students have advanced to the State round, which will again be held via video submission. Congratulations to these students on their hard work in preparing their performances!