



School District of Hillsboro

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TIGER NATION NEWS

December 2020

Curt Bisarek | Superintendent

Greetings Hillsboro Community. As I write this and reflect on our journey over the past 10 months it is hard to imagine a time of greater challenges in the years that I have been in education. From the Governor's "Safer at Home" order in the spring and our teachers working on very short notice to organize virtual instruction for all of our students, to reopening with all of the unknowns about how or if the virus would spread within schools once we did reopen, this has been a challenging period to say the least.



As our communications have mentioned, we organized a "ReStart Committee" made up of staff, community members and administrators that provided guidance and advice on the steps and processes we should implement in order to return to in-person learning. We have had to make modifications along the way as we have learned more and more about the virus. Even the information being provided to us has changed as the medical community learns more over time.

We have been in our "yellow" phase for several weeks and fortunately, cases of the virus within our school population (students and staff) have remained manageable.

Our administrative team and school board have had multiple conversations about our learning phase. We look at not only regional/county data but also cases within our buildings. As a superintendent, I feel the pressure to thread the needle on this.

I think it's appropriate to share what I consider when making recommendations. Over the past few years we as a district have had a very specific focus on the mental health of our students. We have applied for grants, contracted with Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinics and implemented a targeted curriculum on this issue. Consideration of our learning phase is not only a consideration of COVID-19 but also significantly influenced by the mental health concerns of our students. Data showing the increase in anxiety, depression and other adverse effects of isolation students feel when school is all virtual is very concerning to me. Therefore, we have continued to preserve as much as we can safely maintain for our students. We continue to monitor cases for possible spread and develop/maintain our mitigation efforts to the best of our ability but providing the option of attending school allows us to cautiously move forward while keeping the mental health of our students as a priority.

This past summer, we were one of a few schools to be accepted and certified to teach Teen Mental Health First Aid. This program through the National Council for Behavioral Health trains students in grades 10-12 how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illness and substance use disorders among their friends and peers. Training will begin in January for our seniors and conclude in March with our sophomores. In coming years, we will continue to train all sophomores so all our students have these skills.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP

Linda Bisarek | Interventionist/Instructional Coach

On Wednesday, November 11, 25 9-12 grade students participated in a leadership workshop here at Hillsboro High School. The workshop was facilitated by nationally recognized speaker Mike McGowan, who has been working with students, teachers, families, coaches and athletes for over 25 years. Students could volunteer to attend the workshop or could be nominated to attend by a teacher or coach.



Among the topics covered by McGowan were growing up in a digital world, giving and receiving genuine compliments, making connections and acknowledging the positive things in their lives. Students also had the opportunity to deliver messages through McGowan to their coaches who met with Mike and participated in a session later on in the evening. Students and coaches both reported feeling rejuvenated and excited for the future.

LOOKING ON THE BRIGHT SIDE OF QUARANTINE

Erich Mobley | HHS Junior

Quarantine is a scary topic for many people.

As someone who is in his third round of quarantine due to contact tracing, I can assure you that it is not as bad as you may think and one could say you may even “get used to” this way of functioning in daily life.

In the middle of September, the first wave of school quarantines took place. I was one of those students who was forced to quarantine based on contact tracing. When I was first put into quarantine, I did not like it all and felt trapped in my house. However, I made some changes and started to adapt. I know it is easier said than done, but the advice I want to give to anyone that is forced to quarantine is to not stress yourself out, stay occupied, and do not let the boredom overwhelm you. Think of it all as your very own private two week vacation. As a high school student, I am able to wake up in the morning five minutes before school starts and not have to worry about physically getting ready to go to school.

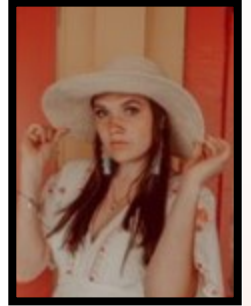
Quarantine may not be the ideal situation for many people. Whether you are in contact or you have tested positive, we have to do this to keep safe. In the end, it is what is best for all of us to keep you, your friends, family and teachers safe. Stay safe Tigers.



A NIGHT AT THE MOVIES GETS CUT SHORT

Grace Holthe | HHS Senior

Movie theaters may have been closed, but that didn't stop Hillsboro High School from bringing action to life. This year's homecoming theme was "A Night at the Movies", and the students and staff did not disappoint! With the quick transition to Yellow Phase shortly before the start of homecoming week, the student council made the decision to merge two dress-up days into one so that everyone could participate in all four categories.



Monday and Thursday were *Disney + and Mean Girls day*, while Tuesday and Friday were *The Parent Trap (twin day)* and *Spirit Day*.

Hillsboro was unable to hold traditional homecoming activities such as Mr. Tiger, Dodgeball, Musical Chairs, and many more.

The dance was also canceled due to the Coronavirus, but Hillsboro hopes to have their annual Prom in the spring.



THROUGH THE EYES OF A VIRTUAL LEARNER

Haylee Fry | HHS Junior

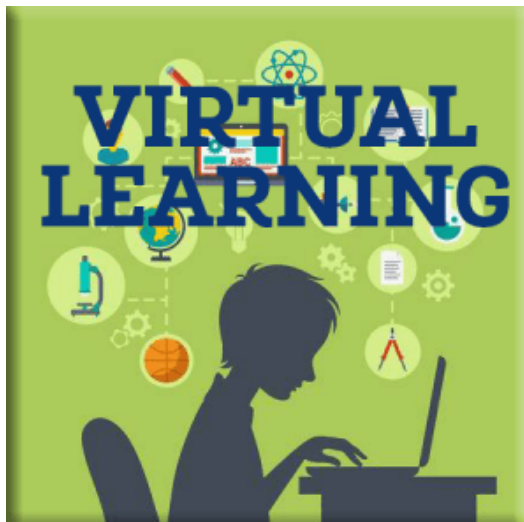
COVID -19 has changed a lot of things in our daily lives, one being how we attend school. Families had the option prior to the beginning of the school year to go to school in person or be a full time virtual student. This is new to all of us and has definitely been a learning experience for everyone. Mrs. Bisarek is serving as the high school virtual liaison and has been busy assisting teachers, students and families through virtual learning.



Mrs. Barreau and Mr. Thompson have also been providing technical support.

Both students and staff have had to adapt to new things this school year and one of the biggest changes is the use of Google Meet, a video communication service that allows students and staff to interact in a live setting. Teachers have a google meet set up for virtual students to be able to join class from home while still teaching their students in class as well. Every full time virtual student gets a supply drop for the following week on Friday mornings. Virtual students are required to be “live” during the entire school day and also available for a meeting if requested by a teacher from 2:45-3:30. This is now designated time to virtually meet with students to get any extra help they may need.

Being a virtual student myself has come with a lot of responsibilities. I need to be organized, prepared and able to communicate with all my teachers. I need to stay on task and focused which can sometimes be a struggle at home where there are many other distractions. I know it is not always easy for the staff, but I really appreciate all they are doing to keep us successful even when learning at home.



EXTRA SANITATION PRECAUTIONS TAKEN

Sierra Siefert | HHS Junior

There is no question, this year has not been ordinary.

All teachers and staff members have been taking extra sanitary precautions to keep students safe. Teaching staff is required to use a spray sanitizer on desks between every class as well as disinfect any classroom item used by a student. Most teachers have an area set aside in their classrooms for students to place items that have been used to later be sanitized before another student is allowed to use them. Teachers also keep up to date seating charts in the case of contact tracing.

The custodians have done a lot of work to keep everyone as safe as possible, such as spraying down each classroom Monday through Thursday after students and staff have left the building. Hand sanitizing stations have been placed in multiple locations throughout the school buildings. There is a new hallway system as well, consisting of “aisles” to keep students physically separated during passing time. All students and staff do their part by wearing masks, washing hands, and using hand sanitizer regularly.

Thank you to our amazing custodial staff!!



ORANGE & BLACK, A & B

Lanaya Coblentz | HHS Senior



With so many changes to daily life, it is no surprise that the high school schedule has changed as well. Students and staff have had to adapt to new block schedules which consists of students having four classes one day and their other four classes the following days. Mondays and Thursdays are “A” days, Tuesday and Friday are “B” days and Wednesdays alternate between the two.

In addition to a new block schedule, students in grades 7-12 have been in the “yellow phase” for the majority of the school year thus far which consists of cohorts. The student body is divided into two groups. The Black Cohort attends school in person on Mondays and Tuesdays, while the Orange Cohort attends on Thursdays and Fridays. On Wednesdays, all students meet in their classes via Google Meet. Some students have grown to like the block schedules due to having extra days to get homework done before class meets again, but some students don’t like the idea of having multiple days in between their classes. Cohorts have made this year more secluded as students may never get to see their friends while in the yellow phase if they are not in the same cohort. On the other hand, some students like having cohorts so they can stay home in bed for the other three days.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
BLACK COHORT	IN-PERSON A Day	IN-PERSON B Day	VIRTUAL A/B Rotation	VIRTUAL A Day	VIRTUAL B Day
LEARNING SCHEDULE					
ORANGE COHORT	VIRTUAL A Day	VIRTUAL B Day	VIRTUAL A/B Rotation	IN-PERSON A Day	IN-PERSON B Day

VOLLEYBALL TEAM HAD HIGH HOPES

Malia Liska | HHS Junior

Coming off of a tremendous state run last year, the Hillsboro Tigers volleyball team had high expectations coming into the season, and they did not disappoint. Other teams around the Scenic Bluffs chose to play volleyball in the spring, but Hillsboro was determined to play this fall. Joining the Ridge and Valley Conference, the Tigers dropped only one match throughout all conference play to their fellow Co-Conference champs, LaFarge.



During playoffs, the Tigers were missing their returning middle Grace Holthe due to Covid contact tracing, however they still put up a fight in the Regional Championship where they fell to LaFarge in five sets. Due to their tremendous efforts throughout the year, many conference awards were given out. Senior Grace Holthe, Junior Malia Liska, and Sophomore Toni Mitchell earned first team All Conference; along with Senior Paige Verbsky earning honorable mention.

In addition to conference awards, Senior Grace Holthe and Junior Malia Liska earned All-State honorable mention. Congratulations to Mark Sullivan and the entire volleyball team on a great season.



FOOTBALL TEAM MET WITH MANY OBSTACLES

Niles Hammer | HHS Junior

With the reorganization of football conferences, Hillsboro was scheduled to start the 2020 season in the Ridge and Valley conference.

With the onset of COVID-19, the football season began to get complicated for the Hillsboro Tigers due to restrictions, contact tracing, and quarantines. After several games were canceled, the tigers played five games against four teams: Ithaca, De Soto, Luther, and Highland (playing De Soto twice on back to back weeks). Playing with many players quarantined, and with a limited crowd (only 4 spectators allowed per player), would hurt any team's season, and the Hillsboro Tigers were no exception.

They finished 0-5 with some very close losses, losing by only six points. Head coach Eric Auel had this to say about the 2020 season, “This season was a test of flexibility and resilience. It was very challenging from week to week knowing what players, coaches, and opponents were going to be on the field any given night. We felt fortunate to have the opportunity to practice and play regardless of how unsure we were from week to week.”



CROSS COUNTRY WRAPS UP SEASON WITH SECTIONAL QUALIFIER

Megan Salisbury | HHS Senior

The Cross Country team wrapped up their season in late October.

The boys team was led by seniors Billy Filler, Matthew Mondesir, and Freeman Burch, while the girls team was younger and less experienced with no returning seniors.

The conference meet was held at Brookwood High School as well as the subsectional meet where junior, Jordan Erickson, placed in the top ten with an outstanding time advancing to sectionals. Sectionals were held in Darlington, finishing off the Hillsboro cross country season for the year.

Both boys and girls ended the season with personal records, hard work, and memories.



WINTER SPORTS SNEAK PEEK

Mitch Huntley | HHS Senior

Girls Basketball | The Girls Basketball team is looking to keep the upward trend of the program by competing for a conference and regional championship once again this year. Two years ago, the Tigers had a disappointing loss to LaFarge in the first round of regionals. However, last year, led by a strong group of seniors, they made it all the way to a home-court advantage regional championship where they fell just short against Potosi/Cassville. This year, returning only two starters (Grace Holthe-Sr., and Malia Liska-Jr.), the Tigers will look to rely on its underclassmen. The Tigers will also have an extra fan in the stands this year, with a new addition to the head coach's family, Ames Egan! Good luck to the Girls Basketball team this year! First game is December 1st @ Royall.



Boys Basketball | As if there weren't enough changes this year, the Hillsboro Boys Basketball team is starting off the year with a new head coach. After Curt Hildreth's resignation, Wonewoc alum Jordan Polk is taking the reins as the new head coach. As they lost all five starters from last year to graduation, the Tigers will return four seniors (Colin Johnson, Kirk Huntley, and Mitch Huntley), but will heavily rely on its underclassmen to take a step forward and contribute to the team. Tiger fans will have their eyes on the court (or screen) to watch the boys play their first game against Richland Center on December 5th!



Wrestling | While things may be different on the mat for Hillsboro's wrestling team, one thing will remain the same, the strong group of senior wrestlers. Returning are three sectional qualifiers from last year, as well as another from two years ago. Due to COVID-19 concerns, the Tiger wrestling team will only be competing in dual meets, and no tournaments. Nugent's squad will look to kick off their season against Necedah in Hillsboro on December 4th. Good luck to all wrestlers and Coach Nugent!

HILLSBORO WELCOMES NEW STAFF IN THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

Tylor Cornell/4th Grade Teacher



Tylor is from Boscobel, WI.

I'm married to Chelsy who is finishing up her degree in supply chain management (business). I have two dogs: Bailey, a German Shepherd and Chloe, a Golden Retriever.

This is my 1st year teaching.

In my free time I like to golf, throw bean bags and spend time with my family.

Kendra Bartels/Paraprofessional



I am originally from Necedah, WI. After graduating from high school I attended Western Tech in La Crosse and transferred to Northeast Wisconsin Tech in Green Bay and graduated from there in 2019.

Prior to becoming part of the Tiger family, I worked as an Autism Therapist. In my free time I enjoy traveling, enjoying the outdoors and spending time with friends and family.

Sarah Nusse/Paraprofessional



Originally from the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, I moved to Wisconsin's rolling hills with my family and attended high school here in Hillsboro, and graduate in 2012. After graduation, I was able to explore the world a bit, going to the Cook Islands and New Zealand, where I was able to enjoy some crazy activities. My favorites included bungee jumping, sky diving, and the Canyon Swing. I then moved to Milwaukee, where I attended Alverno College, the Alma Mater of our own Mrs. Parker. There I met some of the most amazing women and made great memories. Since returning to Hillsboro's rolling hills and community, I am excited to be apart of the staff at Hillsboro schools impacting our young learners. In my spare time, I enjoy exploring new areas with loved ones, spending time with family, and discovering the flavorful world of food.

Eric Rynes / Maintenance Director

Eric is from Richland Center, WI and lives near Gillingham. He is married to Sarah, who works for Inklus from their home. He has 3 Children: Angel (21), Anthony (17), and Anna (15). He has a Son-in-law: Daren and a Grandson: Emerson (9 months). He has a strong maintenance/ custodial background in Hospitality and Healthcare and loves teaching Fire Safety for UWGB. He also has taught Wisconsin DNR Boating Safety and Hunter's Safety and has been a Cub Scout Leader and Boy Scout Leader. In his free time, he enjoys camping, boating, hunting, fishing, cutting wood, helping others in most any way to fix things that do not work, and spending quality time with his family.



HILLSBORO WELCOMES NEW STAFF IN THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

Rebecca Bohn/Paraprofessional



I'm Rebecca Bohn I am a special needs paraprofessional at Hillsboro Elementary School. I've been working with special needs children for over 8 years now. I was working with children in a in-home therapy atmosphere. I have 2 daughters Paige(20) and Hayden (12). In my free time I enjoy baking, canoeing, gardening, golfing, and spending time with my family.

Toni Wallace/District Nurse



I graduated from Kickapoo High School in 2013. My husband Jesse Wallace graduated from Hillsboro High School, where he was an avid football player. I went to UWL for a few years switching my degree plan every semester until I decided to become a nurse. I graduated in 2019 with my Associate Degree of Nursing and worked at Vernon Memorial Hospital on the Medical Surgical unit. I am currently in Western Governor's University's ADN to Master's Degree of Nursing Education Program. I have two beautiful children; Scarlett (3 years) and Leo (11 months). I enjoy spending time with my friends and family, baking, playing volleyball, and swimming.

Steven Christianson / Elementary Principal

Steven Christianson is our new Elementary School Principal who originally hails from Washburn, a little town on a big lake. The legend goes that he grew up with a Ticonderoga pencil in one hand and a math book in the other. His father was his Elementary and Middle School Principal, so he grew up spending a lot of time in the principal's office (but not for bad reasons). It is easy to say that a passion for learning runs in the family.

He currently resides in Cashton with his wife, Cate, and his two supportive dogs. He enjoys woodworking, playing music (singing, guitar, ukulele, and drums), and staying active (tennis, running, trail-riding...). He loves small towns and schools because they truly feel like home. He's excited to be a member of the Hillsboro Tiger Family.



ROAD TO NATIONALS

Sheri Holthe | Business Education / HS FBLA



FBLA is off to a great start this year. Our students are choosing their events for the Regional Competition that happens in February. This year looks different than past years when we were able to travel to another school in the area to compete against other schools in our FBLA district. This year students will be taking online tests at our school in January and averaging their scores if they are in a team event. The students that have chosen to do a presentation will record their presentation and submit it to be judged. We will find out results in February of how many of our hard working students will make it onto the State Leadership Convention in May. If we are able to attend State Leadership in person, we will travel to Green Bay. The students have a goal to make it to Nationals in Anaheim, California this summer. I am so proud of our FBLA students for taking on the challenges and changes this year and still having goals and dreams they are working towards.



SNOW DAY OR VIRTUAL DAY?

Curt Bisarek | Superintendent



There has been a lot of conversation about snow days and virtual days, lately. We will continue with the intention of having three, no students work, no adult work, Snow Days. After those three days (if and possible when that happens - this is Wisconsin), we will do our best to have virtual learning days to provide instructional minutes for our students.

After the **third** inclement weather day:

- Administration will communicate to staff the day before a day that has a high chance of being an inclement weather day.
- Staff will only be expected to come in if it is safe for you to do so.
 - If you are not coming into the building there will be a Google Form sent out that you will need to fill out.
- Elementary School Teachers:
 - Plan for and send home materials for students to complete **and/or** send chromebooks home with students.
 - Specialists' teachers will post activities for virtual learning.
 - In the case of an unanticipated inclement weather day, Elementary school teachers will have a professional work day. This learning day will not be made up for students.
- High School/Middle School Teachers:
 - Chromebooks will already be going home with Middle and High School students
 - Resume Learning Virtually (Red Phase Schedule)
 - In the case of an unanticipated inclement weather day, resume learning virtually (Red Phase Schedule)
 - Support Staff (except custodians) will not report on those days, unless told otherwise.
 - 2 Hour Delays will be handled as they have in the past: start at 10am and schedule will not be altered