

Seneca Area School's Report

Alex Osterkamp District Principal

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Welcome to the 2023-24 school year! I hope everyone has had a safe and enjoyable summer.

A number of changes have taken place here at school since the end of last year, the most noticeable is our new bleachers in the gymnasium. Please welcome our new employees. Bridgett Kramer is our 4th grade teacher. Bridgett brings a lot of experience to the elementary and we are excited to have her. Jared Payne is our high school math intern. Savanna Cauffman is our paraprofessional. Kari Hagensick is our administrative assistant. We are excited to have these quality employees, combining with an already strong staff. Our employees are quality individuals, and I firmly believe our instructional and support staff are the greatest strength of our school.

Our school continues to strive for the continual growth and improvement of each of our students, so that upon graduating they can compete with the best. Each student in grades 2 thru 12 has access to his/ her own Chromebook personal technology device. This is the twelfth year we are using these at the high school level. We implemented this program in 2013, thanks to a generous donation from the Seneca Educational Foundation. This is one of the ways our school is staying on top of the quickly evolving trends in public education.

Summer is rapidly winding down, and the first day of school is August 29. We want to get the school year off to a strong and positive start. In order to more smoothly achieve that goal, we have expanded on some of the more important details in the pages to follow. Please note the important dates that are listed. If you have any questions about this information, contact us at the school.

Calendar Reminders

Just a reminder that we have the following school calendar events in August and September:

- First day of school, **Tuesday, August 29**. Early release at 1:30 p.m.
- No school, **Monday, September 4** for Labor Day
- School pictures, **September 28th and September 29th**



School Web Page

Our school web page is the biggest single source of information on our school, including daily and monthly schedules, menus, handbooks, contact information, announcements, calendars, access to *Skyward* and much, much more. Text messages and reminders are sent out through the school webpage. This website is powered by a company named *Apptegy*, and it integrates seamlessly with smart phones and smart tablets. It allows students, parents, and District residents to access all our school information more directly. The upgrading of this website has greatly increased the flow of information from our school to our community. You can find the school website at: www.seneca.k12.wi.us

Through the website, we have launched a mobile app that helps students, parents, and community members know what is happening at school, right from their phones. We know that families are using smart phones as a primary means to communicate. That's why we've created an app that is custom-built for mobile. On the app, you can find cafeteria menus, sports scores, contact information for staff, and event information. The app will allow you to better know what is going on at school, connect with school staff, and stay up-to-date with school information. You can download the app for free from the Apple App Store or Google Play, as follows:
on Android: <http://bit.ly/2UDC2jb> on iPhone: <https://apple.co/2Uv3YWq>

Accessing Student Information

Most parents would like to know as much as possible about their child's school experience, and we try to accommodate you through our *Skyward student services software*. This software allows the school to better organize and track your child's information, and allows you to access this information more easily. You are able to access your child's file from any computer with your own personal password, allowing you to view your child's grade reports, lunch account balance, discipline record, attendance records, and other useful information. If you would like a password for *Skyward* "Family Access", contact Ms. Laury Nelson at lnelson@seneca.k12.wi.us or Ashley Roberts aroberts@seneca.k12.wi.us

Start of the Year Forms Available in Skyward!

The school would like all families to fill out start of the year forms by Monday, August 21. We are encouraging families to fill out all start of the year forms on Skyward again this year. These forms are best completed on a computer or laptop, not a cell phone. You will be able to update your family and student information, fill out free/reduced lunch applications, and fill out all of your technology forms through Skyward. Access to these forms will be on your homepage when you log into Skyward. Click on "Go to Start of the Year Forms for your student" and it will take you into the steps to complete your start of the year forms.

If you need access to Skyward, you can fill out the "Skyward Access" form on our website, www.seneca.k12.wi.us. Click the information tab at the top of the home page, then "miscellaneous forms", then "Skyward Family Access Request Form". Fill this out and click "submit". You will be emailed your login information to begin using Skyward. For questions on any of these procedures, please contact Kari Hagensick at kahagensick@seneca.k12.wi.us or Ashley Roberts at aroberts@seneca.k12.wi.us

****We are strongly encouraging families to complete the online free and reduced application, as it is an important source for school funding.**

IMPORTANT START OF THE YEAR REMINDERS:

Monday, August 28, 2023:

- **Open house in the elementary, 1:00-4:00 p.m.:** Teachers will be in their classrooms and students will have the opportunity to bring their school supplies in with them. Please remember to have your child label all their personal items.
- **6th Grade Middle School Orientation, 3:00-4:00 p.m.:** The 6th graders will meet in the Band Room for middle school orientation. The teachers will be on hand to introduce themselves. We will walk the students around to all the classrooms and they will receive their schedules and locker number if they choose to put their school supplies inside.
- **Community Picnic, 1:00-4:00 p.m.-:** A picnic lunch of locally raised Hamburgers, hotdogs, potato salad, fresh fruit, chips, and Homemade dessert will be provided in the school cafeteria. Come socialize with other members of our school community and celebrate the start of another successful school year!

Tuesday, August 29:

- **First Day of School, 8:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m.:** Students should be ready for their buses 10 minutes early on the first day. Elementary students will report to their classrooms. Students in grades 6 - 12 will report to the gym.



Resource Officer at our School

Crawford County Sheriff Dale McCullick and the Sheriff's Department detectives have worked proactively with our school, in regard to considering ways to improve school safety in our school. Several years ago an initiative promoted by the Sheriff's Department was the hiring of a school resource officer to be shared between the Wauzeka-Steuben School District, the North Crawford School District, and our school. The School Boards of those three schools made a commitment to fund the hiring of a person to fill that position. Officer Liz Volten was hired to be the school resource officer in those three schools at that time. Officer Volten has worked hard to build connections with our students and staff and has helped us handle many challenges that have come up at school. Officer Volten has been a positive addition to our staff, and we are excited about the many benefits a resource officer has brought to our learning environment.

Personal Technology Devices in Our School: High School and Middle School are One-to-One, Elementary Has Access Also!

Since September of 2013, each of our high school students has been using a personal technology device for their classes and at home. This initiative is the culmination of a project that began about two years prior to that date.

In November of 2011, Frank McCormick of the Seneca Educational Foundation approached the school, expressing the Foundation's desire to donate to our school for a project that would make a difference for our students. After considering many options, our teachers decided that it would best benefit our district to do a deeper exploration of the many different options of personal technology devices, so that staff could better understand which of these devices would best serve our students at each specific grade level. The Foundation made it possible for our school to purchase a number of the following personal technology devices: *Amazon* Kindle Fire, *Apple* Ipads, and *Google* Chromebooks. Our teachers received training on the various devices and incorporated them into their classroom activities.

After a year of using the various devices, the consensus among high school instructors was that the Chromebooks were the best fit at that level. A decision was made to pursue a "one-to-one" technology device ratio in the high school: a Chromebook for each high school student. A Chromebook is a laptop personal computer, which stores all its information over the Internet (on the "cloud"). They boot-up in about 10 seconds, making them ideal for classroom projects and activities. As they have so many times in the past, the Seneca Educational Foundation stepped forward to support our students by providing over \$20,000 in funds needed to provide each of our high school students with a Chromebook. We laid the groundwork for the project during the summer of 2013, and the students have been using the devices in their classes since September of that year. The Foundation has generously funded the Chromebooks for each of our freshman classes since then.

This important project benefits student instruction in many ways. Among them, students have almost instant access to their device for instructor designed classroom activities and projects. Students are able to make more effective use of instructional time, as they no longer have to take time moving to a computer and wait for it to log them in. Students who could not normally afford a personal technology device now have one assigned to them, and are able to access their school accounts from home. Upon graduating, students are able to keep their devices.

We have also worked to make these devices more accessible for our other students. In the middle school, a bank of Chromebooks is available in each homeroom, so students can use them in their classrooms. In the elementary, grades 2-5 have racks in their classroom holding their Chromebooks. The kindergarten and first grade classrooms each have a number in their rooms, to use for small group learning activities. Our students have realized many benefits from these devices, and we are anticipating more. According to a study done by Project Revolutionizing Education, 100 percent of properly implemented one-to-one schools reported improvement on paperwork reduction, 92 percent said disciplinary action decreased, 90 percent had an improvement on high-stakes test scores, and 89 percent reported a reduction in dropout rates.

We are excited about our District's efforts to stay at the technological forefront in educating our students. A big thank you goes to the Seneca Educational Foundation and all its benefactors, for again stepping to the forefront and allowing our students to receive top-notch educational services. We greatly appreciate their support, and the support of all those in our community who make it possible for our students to benefit from great educational activities such as these. Students need to take great care of the Chromebooks. Simple repairs and maintenance can be costly.

End of Day Check-out Procedures for Elementary

In order to avoid confusion as elementary students leave school at the end of the day, and to make things safer for your child, the following procedures will be followed for pick-up of elementary students grades Pre-K thru 4, who do not ride the bus at the end of the school day.

At the end of the school day, elementary students who expect to be picked up by parents or guardians will wait on the east end of the elementary building, near door 33, for their designated adult to pick them up. **Children will not be dismissed to go to individual vehicles.** The adult picking the child up should go to the teacher in charge of the students, and verbally let them know that the student is leaving school grounds with their parent/ guardian. While this is an added inconvenience for you as adults, we take our responsibility towards your child's safety very seriously. We feel this added step ensures that your child is accounted for every step of the way as they leave school grounds. We will do everything we can to provide a safe and nurturing environment for your child to learn in, while at the same time minimizing any risks that may present themselves.

School Entry and Exit Points

The changing threats to schools in our society today have led us to continually evaluate the way we operate in terms of safety and security. Our goal is to make our school as safe as possible while still allowing us to operate efficiently as a school. The following procedures will be in effect for the upcoming school year:

Elementary Building: Entry point: Double doors facing the gym (Door 30). You must contact the office to have them open this door when you enter; there is a buzzer by the door. All other doors will be locked throughout the school day.

Middle School/High School: Entry points: Double glass doors on Highway 27 (Door 1). Upon request, office personnel will unlock the door. All other doors will be locked throughout the school day.

If you need to get your child during school hours, enter the doors listed above. You will not be able to enter the building from any other point. Doors are numbered for your convenience. There are “15 minute” parking spaces along Highway 27. In the elementary, we have placed a rope along the south side of the playground to prevent traffic from entering during the school day. You can park along the rope, when it is in place, to enter the elementary.

While these procedures may be an inconvenience for you, and for us also, we are doing this to make your child as safe as possible. We are doing everything we can to provide a safe and nurturing environment for your child to learn in, while at the same time minimizing any risks that may present themselves.



Athletic Events Season Passes and Fees

Athletic event season passes, which are good for all home events, are available in the school office, including:

Adult Season Passes: \$35. per adult.

Student Season Passes: Admission for our school students to home events is free.

Golden Passes: No Cost. Lifetime passes available to those 62 years of age and older. Allows holder to attend all conference games except at DeSoto.

Athletic Fees: There are no student fees for participation in athletics this year.

Welcome Back from Title I

Welcome to the new school year! It is an exciting time of year as your child settles into their new classroom and routines. As we start this new year, we would like to inform you about the Title I Program within the Seneca School District. Title I is a federal program that provides funds to school districts and schools with high numbers or high percentages of children who are disadvantaged to support a variety of services. Its overall purpose is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education. (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction website) In the Seneca School

District, Title 1 is considered a schoolwide program, which gives all staff the ability to serve all children in our school. The purpose of a schoolwide program is to generate high levels of academic achievement in core subject areas for all students, especially those in most need. Furthermore, Title 1 allows for extra help in the basic skills as indicated by achievement and reading test scores or as requested by a teacher or parent(s). If you have questions about the Title I program in Seneca or if you have questions or concerns about your child's academic progress as they transition into the new school year, please feel free to contact Kelsey Kleven (Title I Coordinator) by phone at 737-9177 ext 1122 or by email at kkleven@seneca.k12.wi.us.

Academic Standards

“The Seneca Area School District follows the standards as adopted by the state of Wisconsin as a framework for our academic expectations. All state and federal laws are complied with. The Common Core Standards have been followed where appropriate and are used as an outline of base expectations. These previously mentioned baseline academic standards are exceeded by our school in most areas.”

NON DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of the School District of Seneca that no person may be denied admission to any public school in this district or be denied participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be discriminated against any curricular, extracurricular, pupil services, recreation, or other program or activity on the basis of creed, religion, race, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, political affiliation, arrest or conviction record, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, religion, physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability or handicap as required by s. 118.13 Wis. Stats. This policy also prohibits discrimination as defined by the Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race and national origin), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for information, or who have questions concerning this policy should contact:

Alex Osterkamp, District Principal, Seneca Area School District, 202 Main St, Hwy 27, Seneca, WI 54654 Email: aosterkamp@seneca.k12.wi.us

Seneca Area School District Telephone Directory
School Number: 608-737-9177

District Office: Ext 1150

MS/ HS Office: Ext 1100

Athletic Director Erica Clark	1153	Kleven, Kelsey	1320/1122
Board & Mtg Room	1103	Kramer, Bridgett	1324
District Administrator	1151	Kriel, Shannon	1310
Boone, Michaela	1321	Kwasny, Brian	1124
Cale, Angie	1314	Loeffelholz, Brigid	1110
Chambers, Kayla	1155	Lindstrum, Melanie	1312
		MS/HS LMC	1200
Dist Learning Lab	1101	Nelson, Laury	1101
Davidson, Shelly	1114		
Davies, Philip	1116	Oppriecht, Kari	1117
		Osterkamp, Alex	1106
Elementary LMC	1323	Osterkamp, Nikki	1322
Elementary Workroom	1315		
Room 123 Phone	1123	Elementary Para Office	1313
		Payne, Jared	1130
Fisher, Jenny	1120	PC Lab Classroom	1107
Foley, Dave	1154		
Gym Office	1114	Roberts, Ashley	1100
Groh, Dan & Cheryl	1157	Rogers, Misty	1128
Hagensick, Kari	1150	Server Room	1104
Hamann, Gary	1118	Sime, Cody	1113
Hammell, Carolyn	1323/1200	Sime, Sarah	1126
Hawkinson, Jeanette	1121	Student Office Phone	1131
MS/HS Teacher Workroom	1102	Updike, Michelle/Kitchen	1112
Jackson, Jesse	1152	Wagner, Amanda	1125
Janousek, Annie	1127	Walters, Lacy	1325
Karls, Andy	1129	Welsh, Madalyn	1316

Information About the Free and Reduced School Lunch Program

We have included the application for the Free and Reduced School Lunch Program with the registration forms on the school's website. Please consider the following points regarding this important program:

- **This program is a vital source of aid to our school district. Many federal and state programs base the amount of funding they send to us on the number of families in our district who are eligible for the Free and Reduced School Lunch Program.**
- If you are eligible for this program, please fill out the paperwork even if you choose not to participate in the program. This benefits our school by allowing us to receive aid from other federal and state programs.
- Your choice on whether to participate in this program is **confidential information**. Office personnel do not share it with anyone.
- If your income drops suddenly during the school year, you can become eligible for the program and fill out the paperwork at any time. If your income increases during the school year, it does not affect your eligibility.
- Students eligible for the free and reduced lunch program can receive two free ACT fee waivers and a reduced Advanced Placement (AP) exam fee. See Mrs. Chambers for more information about these benefits.

If you have any other questions about the Free and Reduced Lunch program, please contact Kari Hackensick at the school office.

School Lunch Program Policies

We will be using the *Skyward* computerized system for our hot lunch and breakfast programs again this year. You can view your lunch account information from your personal computer through the *Skyward* "Parent Access" program. *A reminder that information about free and reduced lunch is located elsewhere in this newsletter.*

Lunch:

Elementary: \$2.85 daily. \$14.25 weekly
Grades 6-12: \$3.25 daily. \$16.25 weekly.
Reduced: \$0.40 daily. \$2.00 weekly.
Adults: \$4.45 daily.

Breakfast:

No charge for those qualifying for free or reduced lunch, 80 cents for all others.

Individual Purchase of Milk-.45 cents

Electronic lunch account payment option is now available!

You will need your family ID# to set up an account. This number can be located in your parent skyward account. Once you login to skyward, click on **STUDENT INFO** along the left side of the screen, then click on the blue **View (student's name) family**. Your family ID# will be located in the upper right corner of this screen.

The **Seneca Area School District** is pleased to introduce a new program called *e~Funds for Schools*. This program offers various options for parents/guardians who *choose* to make payments online and is extremely user friendly. Not only will you have the ability to have lunch payments electronically withdrawn from your checking account or charged to your credit card, you also have the flexibility to make a payment at any time through the school's website.

The *e~Funds for Schools* electronic payment service is provided to the school by a third party service provider. The service provider has a nominal fee for their service. **The Seneca Area School District will cover the fees associated with transactions, therefore these services are provided at no cost to parents and guardians.** The system carries a Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) charge if the payment is "bad." When you set up your account, please review your options carefully.

You are in full control of your account and can make a payment at any time that is convenient for you. **No payments will be allowed without your knowledge and authorization through this secure payment system.** By providing your home and/or work email address, an email notification informing you of the student's name, purpose of the payment, and the amount of the item, will be sent to you each time that a payment is to be processed. The *e~Funds for Schools* site is secure and uses industry standard data encryption.

How does e-Funds for Schools work?

- Families set up and maintain their own logins, passwords, and payment preferences. Your account information is retained in a password-protected file.
- *e~Funds for Schools* will help to eliminate last minute check writing hassles, improve efficiencies, and help cut costs for both you and the school district.
- Online payments will help eliminate the worry that your children could lose or forget the money intended for school items or that it might be spent on other non-school related items.
- Payments from a credit card or checking account may easily be set up. **If possible, please use your checking account to make payments. Checking accounts are referred to as a DIRECT DEBIT. Credit/Debit card transactions have a higher fee than Direct Debit transactions.**
- Parents/guardians may establish a recurring payment or may opt to make a one-time payment.
- The program offers various types of payment to families that include but are not limited to instructional materials, field trip fees, yearbook fees, graduation fees, and of course food service payments. The system may be expanded to include other fees as well.

Seneca Area School District e~Funds link:

<https://payments.efundsforschools.com/v3/districts/56782>

Wisconsin School Bus Stopping Procedures

Wisconsin school buses use an eight-light system, which incorporates the use of amber lights with red lights. The amber lights will flash before the red lights, as a “Warning” that the bus is preparing to stop. The additional lights alert vehicles traveling around a school bus that they should prepare to stop, similar to a traffic light.

-When amber lights are on: Drivers should slow and proceed with caution, preparing to stop.

-When the red lights are on: Drivers are required to stop 20 or more feet from the bus. This applies to all vehicles, both those following and approaching from the opposite direction, and in all lanes. No vehicle may proceed until the bus resumes motion and has turned off the red warning lights. The stop arm on the bus is an added communication to other drivers, but the lack of an extended stop arm is **not** reason to pass a bus whose red lights are flashing.

Parents, please inform your child of these procedures, so that they are aware. Bus drivers will signal for children to cross traffic with two short beeps of their horn.

As we prepare for another school year, please watch for school buses with amber and red lights flashing; they are preparing to stop or are stopped! A vehicle owner can be cited when the driver of a car passes a school bus illegally. A law enforcement officer need not witness this violation if the school bus driver reports it to the law enforcement agency within 24 hours. Fines can be quite high for illegally passing a school bus, but the risk of hitting a child is even higher. It’s against the law to not stop for a school bus; but more importantly, our children are counting on you for their safety in getting to school and home!

For more complete information on this change, view the youtube link below.:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llpXv7ChbKk>



Bus Drivers Needed

The Seneca Area School District is taking applications for a full-time route driver, and part time bus drivers. If you have a good driving record, and would like more information about this opportunity, you can contact the school: Seneca Area School District, Administrator, 202 Main St, Hwy 27, Seneca, WI 54654

Pay rate is \$35.69 per route, and \$16.55 per hour for extracurricular trips.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires school districts to provide annual notice of student and parent rights regarding student records. Parents/guardians and adult students have the following rights:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's educational records.
2. The right to seek amendment of the student's educational records that they believe to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights.
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.
4. Right to file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office of the U.S. Department of education alleging noncompliance with these requirements.

The school may release the following information without consent, as the school has designated it as "directory information": Student's name, address, home telephone, date of birth, participation in school recognized sports and activities, weight, and height of members of athletic teams, and year in school.

People with questions or comments about this policy should see the school principal.

Students, or parents of students, may submit a written request to the District that the student's name, address, and telephone listing may not be released to military recruiters or institutions of higher learning without written parental consent. The school will follow such requests.

SENECA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNUAL NOTICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION REFERRAL AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Upon request, the Seneca Area School District is required to evaluate a child for eligibility for special education services. A request for evaluation is known as a referral. When the district receives a referral, the district will appoint an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team to determine if the child has a disability, and if the child needs special education services. The district locates, identifies, and evaluates all children with disabilities who are enrolled by their parents in private (including religious) schools, elementary schools and secondary schools located in the school district.

A physician, nurse, psychologist, social worker, or administrator of a social agency who reasonably believes a child brought to him or her for services is a child with a disability has a legal duty to refer the child, including a homeless child, to the school district in which the child resides. Before referring to the child, the person making the referral must inform the child's parent that the referral will be made.

Others, including parents, who reasonably believe a child is a child with a disability may also refer the child, including a homeless child, to the school district in which the child resides. Referrals must be in writing and include the reason why the person believes the child is a child with a disability. A referral may be made by contacting Jesse Jackson, Director of Special Education, Seneca Area School District, at 608-737-9177, ext. 1153 or by writing him at 202 Main St, Hwy 27, Seneca, WI 54654, or email: jjackson@seneca.k12.wi.us