On the Path to Kindergarten
Important Nights for Parents and Incoming Kindergarten Students

It is time to prepare for the big day when your preschooler heads off to kindergarten. The Sauk Rapids-Rice School District provides all-day, every day kindergarten to our new students entering our elementary schools at Mississippi Heights, Pleasantview, and Rice. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend both events below.

**Kindergarten Welcome & Information Night: January 26, 2016**
Parents of all incoming kindergarten students are asked to attend an informational session on Tuesday, January 26, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. in the Performing Arts Center at Sauk Rapids-Rice High School.

The purpose of this meeting is to learn about kindergarten programming, meet principals, find out what kindergarten is all about, answer questions you may have, and receive registration materials. If you do not know which attendance area you live in, we will provide information on that night.

**Kindergarten Open House & Registration: February 4, 2016**
Your next step will be to complete the required forms, and then attend a Kindergarten Open House and Registration Night on Thursday, February 4, 2016 with your child at the school your child will attend. This will be your child’s chance to interact with kindergarten teachers, see a classroom, and for parents to submit registration materials. **Your child will not be enrolled until a completed registration form is received.**

In addition to the forms you receive in your packet, please plan to bring the following items with you to the Kindergarten Open House on February 4, 2016:

- Original Birth Certificate: a copy will be made and the original returned to you;
- Immunization Record/Physical Form: if your child has had the immunizations necessary for kindergarten. If not, this is due in the elementary office by August 10, 2016;
- Release of Information Form: if your child was preschool screened in another school district; and
- Open Enrollment Form: if you are not a resident of Independent School District #47.

IN THIS MAILING:
Community Education Winter/Spring Catalog
ECFE Fall Registration

Sauk Rapids-Rice District News | Winter 2016 Issue
Greetings from the Sauk Rapids-Rice School District
From the Superintendent, Daniel Bittman

Sauk Rapids-Rice is a great place to work and learn! Our families are engaged, employees are dedicated, and community members are committed to providing amazing opportunities for our children. Because of these attributes, the Sauk Rapids-Rice staff, administration, and Board of Education are able to focus on their strategic plans and to make decisions accordingly, which benefit all stakeholders.

Below you will find a series of belief statements that guide decision-making throughout the District, as well as Strategic Goals for the 2015 – 2016 school year. While the belief statements below are not meant to represent all beliefs, they are meant to serve as a foundation to guide the decision-making process.

Belief Statements:

- Lifelong learning requires effective partnerships between students, staff, families and community members;
- Continuous learning is essential to the success of our students, staff, and community;
- All learners can and will succeed with the appropriate support, resources, and determination;
- A variety of rigorous, relevant, and in-depth experiences are necessary to meet the unique needs of our learners;
- Positive and continuous student and family engagement are necessary to create a culture of academic achievement;
- A safe and respectful environment is an essential component of learning;
- Assessing student progress, while evaluating and updating curriculum and instruction are needed to prepare every student for postsecondary and/or career success;
- All learners can take responsibility for their educational development through collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity;
- Professional development, support, and resources are important and must be purposeful to maximize learning.
- Communication and outreach are crucial for students, staff, families and community members to thrive; and
- Understanding, respecting and embracing diversity enriches the lives of our students, as well as our staff and community members;
- All learners can develop into responsible, contributing members of our community;
- Strategic Goals:
  - Academic achievement and EXCELLENCE, which include 21st Century Skills* and Knowledge
  - Safe and personalized learning environments
  - Fiscal responsibility and accountability
  - Communication and engagement, which includes fostering an informed and supportive public
  - Leadership effectiveness, which includes continuous learning and growth for students and staff

These goals and the action plans that support them, continuously guide our efforts throughout the school district.

Thank you for your continued support, service, and willingness to engage, I am proud to serve with you!

*21st Century Skills are defined as a set of skills that students need to develop in order to succeed in the information age.

Keep Up With What’s Happening
Visit us online at www.isd47.org
Rice Elementary
Junior Achievement Volunteers Needed!

Rice Elementary is actively looking for Junior Achievement (JA) classroom volunteers! JA is a great way to get involved in the classroom and make a difference in the lives of students.

Junior Achievement programs are geared to the MN academic standards, and teach students about entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and the importance of college. Volunteers are needed for grades K-5. No experience is needed! Teaching kits and materials are provided by Junior Achievement. You will receive support from teaching staff throughout the process.

Please contact Alli at the St. Cloud office at alli@jaum.org or (320) 310-2165 with any questions.

Check out jaum.org for more information, and http://jaum.org/volunteer/sign-up/ to sign up to be a volunteer!

On the Calendar

Two Hour Late Starts
January 29 and February 26

No School
January 18, February 12 & 15 and March 11 & 25

Visit www.isd47.org for a complete calendar of all late starts, non-school days and events.

Conferences, Concerts and School Events can be found on the District Interactive Calendar at www.isd47.org

The PATH of the STORM Gets a Makeover

The PATH of the STORM is the Sauk Rapids-Rice version of a national effort that focuses on Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). This is an approach that focuses on educating students to be good citizens and effective learners. The emphasis is on explicit instruction of school expectations and “catching students being good” in a variety of ways. This leads to even more positive behavior. Creating a common language that can be reinforced in every area of the school and by all staff is what makes the PATH of the STORM so powerful.

After much discussion, a decision was made to make some adjustments to the PATH language. The intent was to increase the instructional value of the concepts that students are taught. PATH stands for being Prepared, Accepting, Trustworthy, and Helpful. This language is a critical tool for teaching students to be positive community members and to be ready to learn collaboratively with their classmates. Students also use this language to support each other as they work to “stay on the PATH” everyday.

The PATH of the STORM is also about celebrating the great things that happen in our schools. Some of the celebrations have included community walks, school-wide picnics, eating lunch at the PATH Café at MHES, a traveling reptile show at Pleasantview, and weekly and monthly drawings from the PATH bucket. Celebrations that are planned for the upcoming months include completing our PATH mural, school wide celebrations at MHES and PV and a community Barn Dance in Rice. These events are great opportunities for our students, staff, and families to spend time together appreciating the amazing things (large and small) that happen in our schools everyday!

Deep Portage - New for 5th Grade Students

Woods, water, archery, rock climbing, campfires and memories to last a lifetime await 5th graders this year! For the last 35 years, Sauk Rapids-Rice Students have been traveling north to Deep Portage Conservation Camp. Deep Portage is a residential learning center. Its facility sits on over 6000 acres of lakes, bogs, and glacial hills. Thanks to the generous donations of each elementary schools’ PTA and PTAC, the tradition continues for 5th graders this year. In an effort to make this trip available for every student, parent groups donated almost half the cost of the trip for every 5th grader in the Sauk Rapids-Rice School District.

Students from MHES, Pleasantview and Rice will travel in three different trips. Pleasantview students will attend April 27-29, 2016, Rice students will attend May 2-4, 2016 and Mississippi Heights students will finish the experience May 4-6, 2016. In a world filled with technology, students cannot wait to unplug and find themselves lost in the woods.
One District, One Book is Coming
Gearing Up for an Amazing Fifth Year

Sauk Rapids-Rice Public Schools is excited to bring back the One District, One Book program (ODOB) to the elementary schools for a 5th year! The ODOB program started in the Sauk Rapids-Rice district during the 2011 - 2012 school year. The goal of the program is to promote family literacy, as well as to create a shared reading experience within the communities of Sauk Rapids and Rice.

Every family with students in kindergarten through 5th grade will receive a copy of the book on January 29, 2016. Families are encouraged to take time each night to read the book following the district reading calendar. They are also encouraged to participate in related activities throughout the month both at home and at school. Community members are also encouraged to read along. So, the big question...What book is it? As a way to build even more excitement and suspense, the book will be kept a secret until “kick off day” on January 29, 2016.

A vision of the ODOB committee is to ultimately encourage reading conversations that occur not only at home or at school but also at the grocery stores, banks, restaurants, etc. If you are interested in more information about the ODOB program or specifics about the events being planned, please see the district website at www.isd47.org/odob.

Watch for the Book Announcement: January 29, 2016

United We are Strong!

One day each month staff and students wear orange as a reminder that we need to stand up for each other and make sure everyone is welcome. On these Unity Days we make an extra effort to spread the message of Kindness, Acceptance, and Inclusion.

This year there was a contest to create a new slogan for Unity Day. There were many inspiring entries, but the winning design came from Ms. Woolsey’s 4th grade class at Mississippi Heights Elementary. Shirts with the new design were sold in December, but there are still a few available. Please contact your school office if you would like to buy a shirt. However, remember that any orange shirt is a great sign of support. The important thing is to remember that “Being KIND can change a heart and mind!”

Academics, Arts, and Athletics Winners

Congratulations to Jared Timm and Paige Folkerts! They are the 2015 - 2016 AAA (Academics, Arts, and Athletics) winners from SRRHS.

Jared and Paige were chosen for this award for their excellent work in the classroom, in fine arts and athletics. Thank you for your contributions to our school and community.

School Bus Drivers Wanted

Would you like to be on the same work schedule as your kids in school? Your local bus transportation company, MTN, has opportunities for school bus drivers in the Sauk Rapids and Rice area!

Looking for CDL drivers or people willing to learn. Must be 21 years of age, have a clean driving record, and pass a background and drug test.

For information or to apply please call:
320-252-2828
or in person, MTN
1306 - 10th Street North
Sauk Rapids, MN 56379
Technology Resource for Parents

Common Sense Media (www.commonsensemedia.org) has countless valuable resources for parents as they continue to find ways to parent in a world where technology is an incredibly valuable tool, and also provides another environment for parents to be informed and set expectations and limits for their children.

Two of the sections at Common Sense Media provide excellent information and support for parents. Family Guides (found on the top menu bar) provides books, movies and apps for kids with age appropriate suggestions and rankings. Parent Concerns (also found on the top menu bar) provides parent guides for many areas that parents may wonder about or want more information about in today’s world. These include topics such as marketing to kids, cyberbullying, social media, cell phone parenting, learning with technology, and screen time.

Things to keep in mind...

Before creating a family contract about your child’s personal or school-issued device, talk about how the device will be used at home. Use the suggested guidelines below to help make sure that you and your child are on the same page. Then use the customizable form to outline your agreed-upon expectations.

Where, When, & How Long?

- Decide where you’re comfortable having your child use the device. Can they only use it in family spaces, like a family room or kitchen? Can they bring it into their bedroom or the bathroom? Can they use it at the dinner table?

- Consider the difference between using a device for homework and using it for entertainment. Your child’s school may have specific policies for what a device is to be used for and by whom (e.g., no siblings!).

- Talk about what it means to “balance” time spent with technology, media, and other activities. What are some steps your family can take to balance screen time with face-to-face time? Do you want to make the dinner table a device-free zone, in which no family member (not even the adults) may use a cell phone, tablet, or computer? Do you want to set a curfew for when devices need to be shut off?

Checking In

- Explain that as the parent or caregiver, part of your job is to guide them. Identify ways to maintain open, honest communication with your children about their device.

- Discuss how you’ll monitor the device. Do you want to check up on your child’s activity? If so, how? Will you ask your child to give you access to emails, texts, and IMs? Will you review his or her search history (which can be deleted) from time to time?

- Talk with your child about the kinds of apps they’ll be using and accounts they’ll have. Ask them to show you their favorites, as well as the ones they use most. How do they work? What’s so cool about them? How do these tools support their learning?

Communicating Responsibly Online

- Talk about the difference between using the device to communicate with classmates for school-related work and using it for hanging out or goofing off with friends. What are the school’s guidelines for appropriate use? How will you enforce similar expectations at home?

- Discuss your family rules for social networking and messaging – with people they know, sort of know, or don’t know at all. What does it mean to be respectful to and respected by others? What does that look like? Use this as a springboard for a discussion about cyberbullying, privacy, and safety.

See the Winter/Spring Community Education Catalog in this mailing for learning and fun for everyone!
A Note from the School Nurses
When to Keep a Child Home From School

Greetings from your health office staff! As sure as winter has quickly taken us all by surprise, soon enough so will cold and flu season. Here are some quick reminders of when to keep your child home:

- Fever of 100.0 or greater
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Cough that interferes with or limits your child’s activity or play

If these symptoms are present, please keep your child home for 24 hours after the last episode occurs and your child has been fever free without use of Tylenol or Advil as well.

Another reminder, this is also a time lice can occur and be spread. Please remind your child not to share their hat and other winter clothing articles while in school.

We hope that your winter is safe and healthy! Please do not hesitate to call with any questions. Also it’s not too late to get your flu shot!

Hillside Adult Education Offers Customer Service Training

Beginning January 2016, Hillside Adult Education will offer an extended training course for the National Retail Federation’s Customer Service Certificate. This new certificate training is being offered in addition to current training for Personal Care Attendant, ServSafe® Kitchen Manager and Food Handler, NorthStar Digital Literacy, and ParaPro certifications.

These are self-paced courses designed for students who are less than college ready. Participants must enroll in the Adult Education program. Students new to Hillside Adult Education should plan to attend a Monday morning registration/orientation session on January 11, January 18, February 8, or February 29, at 9:00 a.m. The orientation session lasts about two hours. Bring a photo ID and the $20 materials fee.

These professional, industry-recognized certifications will give you an edge if you’re job searching or looking to move up in the job you already have.

For more information or to register, contact Mag Patridge at (320) 258-1112.

SRR Early Entrance to Kindergarten Procedures

As your child approaches school-age, you may have questions about whether he/she might be ready to start school earlier than usual. Early entrance to kindergarten is a big decision. In Minnesota, children are usually required to be five years old on or before September 1 to enter kindergarten. However, there are some situations where a child’s social, emotional, and academic skills make early entrance to kindergarten a possibility. In Sauk Rapids-Rice School District, early entrance to kindergarten can be considered if a child will be five years old on or before October 31 of their entry year.

The District has recently made a careful review of the early entrance to kindergarten procedures. Revised forms and resources are available by visiting the Sauk Rapids-Rice Public Schools website at www.isd47.org. Click on Parents and Families – Kindergarten Information.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Deb Scherber, Early Entrance Coordinator, at (320) 258-1733 or deb.scherber@isd47.org. Application materials are due March 15, 2016.
Early Childhood Screenings Needed for Ages 3 to 5 Years

Early Childhood Screening is a mandatory requirement prior to kindergarten enrollment in any public school in Minnesota. If your child is 3 years of age or older, it’s time to schedule their Early Childhood Screening.

The screening is a broad based assessment that looks at a child’s overall development and is also used to identify possible learning or health concerns so children can receive assistance prior to starting kindergarten.

One parent is required to attend and accompany their child as they complete the one-hour process of Early Childhood Screening.

Call (320) 255-8910 to schedule an appointment for dates/locations listed below.

- Friday, January 22: Hillside
- Monday, January 25: Rice Elem.
- Monday, February 8: Hillside
- Monday, February 29: Rice Elem.
- Friday, February 26: Hillside
- Friday, March 18: Hillside
- Friday, April 8: Hillside

Circle of Security

For the past few years, instructors within the ECFE program at Hillside have become educated with a relationship based early intervention program designed to enhance attachment security between parents and children.

The model is called “Circle of Security” and is based upon decades of research that confirms secure children exhibit increased empathy, greater self-esteem, better relationships with parents and peers, and an increased capacity to handle emotions more effectively when compared to children who are not secure in their attachment with their caregiver.

In this first issue, a brief introduction to the “Circle of Security” will be discussed, followed up in more detail in the next newsletters.

The premise of this practice involves change to a child’s behavior results through changes in parent’s behaviors. The circle graphic depicts three distinct parts summarizing the child’s needs and the secure base and safe haven provided by the caregiver. The Hands represent the secure base and safe haven of the parent, the Top of the Circle represents the child’s need to explore, and the Bottom of the Circle represents the child’s need to be welcomed back. Each of these parts plays a role in a parent attending to a child’s needs at any given place on the circle that the child may be. With an increased awareness to a child’s needs, parents can expand their moment-to-moment parenting choices. Think that a child’s acting out is not about trying to get attention, but rather driven by a need to make an emotional connection with you. The bottom line is children need their parents to be bigger, stronger, wiser, and kind. At the heart of secure attachment is a child’s recognition that he/she has a parent who can be counted on to lovingly provide tenderness, comfort, firm guidance, and protection during the inevitable difficulties in life. If the truth be told, all of us have this need some of the time, no matter what our age.

Registration Begins for Fall 2016 Early Childhood Classes

Online registration for Fall 2016 Early Childhood and School Readiness classes begins Monday, February 1, 2016 at 6:00 a.m. ALL registrations will be processed using an online registration system at http://saukrapids.revtrak.net.

We will continue accepting registrations throughout the summer and into the fall. If you need assistance with registration, call (320) 255-8910.
SRR Online Parent Resources
Where are the things that used to be in my child’s backpack?

In today’s classrooms, some of what used to come home in a student’s backpack is now available in an electronic version. This can make the information more timely and relevant. Information can also be accessed from multiple locations. And, it doesn’t get lost in the backpack or forgotten at school!

Community Backpack
Visit www.isd47.org/calendar-news/backpack to view online flyers and information of events and happenings within our communities, along with community partners and resources.

Teacher Websites
Many teachers, especially those in Grades K-4, use a website to communicate with families. Websites might include weekly news, online resources, and updates for upcoming events. Links to teacher websites are available at www.isd47.org

Skyward
Skyward provides data for attendance and lunch for all K-12 students. Parents can check tardies and lunch balances. In addition, for students in grades 5-12, Skyward tracks grading progress for students. Parents are able to check on students progress in their courses. Each family has a log in to Skyward. Please contact the office of your child’s school if you need log in information.

Schoology
Schoology allows teachers to put their classroom online. What this looks like varies from classroom to classroom. Some things that might be included are:

• A calendar with classroom events.
• Assignment descriptions.
• Links or files embedded in/attached to assignments.
• For parents with students in grades 5-12.

Parents set up a family Schoology account with a student code provided by the school. Please contact the office of your child’s school if you need log in information.

For an online resource visit: www.isd47.org/departments/technology/digital-citizenship.

Using Electronic Library of Minnesota (ELM) Resources

Finding high quality resources online can be a challenge! When students need to find information for a wide variety of purposes, often their first thing to do is to “Google it.” While Google does provide some great and varied resources, often users are left filtering through many resources to find good information. Resources that are reliable and valid are often hidden between all of the unreliable, inaccurate information! One “go to” resource for finding a wide variety of good information is the Electronic Library of Minnesota (ELM). ELM offers great resources for all community members—not just students!

What is ELM?
ELM gives Minnesota residents online access to magazine, journal, newspaper, and encyclopedia articles, eBooks (online books), and other information resources. ELM provides information on a vast array of topics, including consumer information, arts and humanities, current events, health, science, social science, politics, business, and more. And, best of all, this information is all available for FREE to residents of Minnesota thanks to a variety of agencies that have purchased this content for Minnesota residents!

What’s available at ELM?
This is just a small sample of what you’ll find:
• For elementary students: online encyclopedias;
• For middle school students: subject specific resources such as science and history sources;
• For high school students: a research center that features compilations of resource types;
• For adults: health resources and newspapers.

How can I access ELM?
ELM is available to Minnesota residents of any age with any subject interest. ELM is available online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from school, home, work, or at your library.

How can I use ELM?
www.elm4you.org ELM’s website is the host for all the resources. To find the resources, a good starting spot is under the tab that says Topics or Grade Levels.
Minnesota weather is sometimes difficult to predict; it is essential that citizens anticipate and prepare for school closings, delayed openings, and early dismissals. In any weather emergency, the main objective is to provide protection and a safe environment for students.

The three major St. Cloud metro area school districts (Sauk Rapids-Rice, Sartell-St. Stephen and St. Cloud District 742) work together on weather-related emergencies. This means that public and parochial schools in all three districts will close (or remain open) according to the same winter emergency schedule.

Radio stations and news services will be contacted on behalf of each district, but area residents should recognize that the three districts are working together on these decisions.

To gather weather information that is accurate and up to date, the school districts continue to rely on the St. Cloud State University meteorologists for weather forecasts. Professors at the University localize forecasts and advise the school districts on closing decisions.

Heavy snowfall, ice storms, extreme cold, and strong winds are not the only contributors to an emergency situation. Fog can be equally dangerous. While the sun may be shining in one area, visibility may be reduced to a few feet in another location, creating a potential hazard.

**Emergency Closing Procedures**

The three area superintendents will try to announce school closings or late starts the night before severe weather, as information is available. When a morning emergency closing or a late start is required, every effort will be made to reach a decision prior to 6:00 a.m.

Parents are encouraged to prepare for emergency closings. Special childcare arrangements should be made which could be used in the event of a late start, early release, or a school closing. Ultimately, the parent/guardian should make the final decision whether a child should attend school during severe weather.

In the event of an early dismissal or a school closing, ALL student activities and practices, including Community Education and Early Childhood classes, Adult Education, Recreation, Rice Kids’ Club, and ALL community use of buildings is canceled. (Kidstop remains open until 5:00 p.m.)

If District 47 is canceled for the day, ALL activities are canceled and buildings are closed!

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**Weather Announcements**

Skylert

District Website: www.isd47.org

Facebook and Twitter

Weather Hotline: (320) 258-1950

St. Cloud Times: www.sctimes.com

Local Radio and Television stations
Facilities Study
Written by: Dr. Daniel Bittman, Superintendent and Mr. Mark Hauck, Board of Education Chair

Since January 2015, the Sauk Rapids-Rice School District has been studying its facilities as part of its Strategic Plan. More specifically, District staff have partnered with Architects Rego and Younquist (ARY) to identify the most appropriate and cost effective ways to manage various facility needs including, but not limited to aging school buildings, deferred maintenance needs, early childhood and elementary crowding, school security, and inadequate and/or nonexistent facilities for high school athletics.

As part of the study, a Community Task Force will be established and meet in January, February, and March 2016. Members of the task force will review information from the study, develop criteria for making decisions, and ultimately make recommendations to the Sauk Rapids-Rice Board of Education for addressing the District’s facility needs for at least the next ten years.

The Sauk Rapids-Rice School Board and administration remain committed to effective communication, engagement, and transparency, and want to ensure all community members are represented on the Task Force. If you are interested in participating and can commit to three, two-hour meetings on January 26, February 16, and March 29 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., please consider applying.

Information about the District’s Facility Study, which includes an application to be part of the Community Task Force, dates of meetings, enrollment trends, timelines, and ways to receive email updates are available online at www.isd47.org/aboutsrr/facilities-study.

Thank you for your continued engagement and support, we look forward to working with and learning from you in this community process.

6th Grade Activities at SRRMS

New this fall season, 6th grade students had the opportunity to participate in Boys and Girls Soccer, Girls Tennis and Boys and Girls Cross Country. Approximately 60, 6th grade students took advantage of the opportunity and found it to be a great experience.

“I love the experience the 6th graders are getting with the sport of soccer,” said Jill Emery, parent of 6th grade soccer player Gavin Emery. “This opportunity is doing many other great things for our 6th graders, not just improving their soccer skills.”

Starting in March, Swimming and Diving will be the next opportunity for any 6th grade boy or girl who would like to participate. In the Spring, 6th graders will have an opportunity to participate in Boys Tennis, Boys and Girls Golf and Boys and Girls Track and Field. If your child is interested in SRRMS Activities, look for information on the website or by Skylerts. You may also contact the SRRMS Activities Office at (320) 258-1573 with any questions.
Chinese and the Sauk Rapids-Rice School District
Written by Dr. Daniel Bittman, Superintendent

As China’s economy and interactions with the world have increased, so too have the needs and requests related to learning more about Chinese language and culture. As a result of the demands, China established non-profit public institutions to promote Chinese language and culture in foreign countries in 2004: these are referred to as Confucius Institutes/Classrooms.

Confucius Institutes/Classrooms provide opportunities for children to learn more about China, the Chinese language, and about culture. In 2014, Sauk Rapids-Rice applied for and was awarded a five year grant to provide these opportunities for our children. Last year, students attending Mississippi Heights, Pleasantview and Rice elementary schools each received instruction from a teacher of Chinese for one trimester.

Because of the program’s success and positive feedback from students, parents, and staff, these opportunities were expanded during the 2015 - 2016 school year to include instruction throughout the year at each elementary site, as well as at the Middle School.

The grant covers the costs of teacher salaries, classroom supplies and resources, as well as funding for travel and off site learning opportunities.

We are thankful for this opportunity and are appreciative of the Confucius Institute, Hanban and St. Cloud State University for their support and engagement.

For more information about the programs, teachers, or current happenings, please visit the District’s website at http://www.isd47.org/chinese.

EXCEL Award Winners

Congratulations to Tristen Mortenson and Brooke Torvik! They are the 2015 - 2016 EXCEL Award winners from SRRHS.

Tristen and Brooke were chosen for this award for their extensive volunteer work and their leadership at SRRHS.
Students Preparing for 2016 - 2017 Classes
Class Registration for High School Taking Place in January

Students at Sauk Rapids-Rice High School will enter into the course registration process for the 2016 - 2017 school year, in early January. This annual process is vital to the high school experience and to students’ choices beyond high school.

Students have the opportunity to choose the classes they wish to take and set a course for their future.

SRRHS staff members have been planning for the 2016 - 2017 school year for several months and look forward to helping students plan for the future.

High school students have the opportunity to design a schedule with varying levels of rigor, and are encouraged to look for the right amount of challenge as they focus on meeting all requirements.

SRRHS offers seven Advanced Placement classes, five Senior-2-Sophomore courses (St. Cloud State University courses taught at the high school) and several different honors level courses. German and Spanish are also offered at SRRHS. In addition, students have the opportunity to explore numerous elective areas, ranging from business and marketing to culinary arts, agriculture, photography and metals.

Students will have the registration book available on Schoology to access for 9th-11th grade. In addition, the registration book will be available on our high school website. Parents are encouraged to visit with their son or daughter to discover interests and discuss the different options available.

Another great opportunity to learn more about registration will be at Registration Information meetings. These meetings will be held around Parent-Teacher Conferences in mid-January. Students will enter their final registration choices online in late January or early February.

Planning Guide for Senior Class from the Counseling Office

January - Financial Aid and the Process to Apply
There will be a Financial Aid Information Night on January 6, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the SRR High School PAC. A financial aid expert will deliver important information to parents and students. You are encouraged to get your taxes done early as they are an important part of the financial aid process.

February/March - Preparing for Scholarships
Complete your financial aid forms. Contact the financial aid office at the college you are planning to attend if you have any questions. Consider visiting your college of choice again as an “incoming student” to find answers to additional questions you may have as you look at the school in a new light. Students will receive information about local scholarships in March.

Graduation: May 31, 2016
Commencement will be held on the campus of SCSU. Parents and seniors will receive more information in early 2016.

Registration Nights Scheduled for Parents of 2016 - 2017 High School Students
All current 8th-11th grade parents invited

Information Night for Parents of Juniors:
January 20, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.
More information will be coming about Junior Parent Night. Juniors have taken a practice ACT test administered by KAPLAN. The results will be available at the Junior Parent Night on January 20, 2016.

Parent Meeting for Freshmen and Sophomores:
January 21, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.

Parent Meeting for 8th Graders:
February 1, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.

Watch for mailings and Skylerts alerting parents to these information nights relating to your student’s registration plans for 2016 - 2017. It isn’t feasible to have individual meetings with students and parents, so please plan to attend to learn important information and have an opportunity to ask questions.

All meetings will be held in the SRRHS Performing Arts Center.

School Counselors:
A - Ha: Michelle Kremers
He-O: Jen Petersen
P - Z: Cody Randt
Community Education Family Events

Daddy/Daughter Dance | March 4, 2016
Community Education offers a variety of family events for the community to attend. Our annual Daddy/Daughter dance will be held on Friday, March 4, 2016 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Sauk Rapids-Rice Middle School. A DJ will play a variety of fun songs in the gym. Cake and refreshments will be served and a photo booth will be set up to capture pictures of this special night.

Mom/Son Game Night | February 25, 2016
Mom/Son game night will be held on Thursday, February 25, 2016 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Sauk Rapids-Rice Middle School (We have a late start day on Friday, February 26, 2016). “Minute to Win it” games will be played and prizes given out!

Advanced registration is required for all events. To register, contact Community Education at (320) 258-1577 or register online at www.SaukRapidsRiceOnline.org.

Parent Awareness: Alcohol, Drugs, and Our Youth Presentation
Jennifer Kenning, Student Assistance Coordinator and Tom Sigler, School Resource Officer

Monday, February 8, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
SRR Middle School, Door 1
Do you have children, adolescents, or teens in your life? This presentation will give you an overview of drug trends amongst youth, things to watch for, and what YOU can do as a parent/grandparent/family member. Join us in this important, interactive session that all should attend.

Please register in advance by calling Community Education at (320) 258-1577 or register online at www.SaukRapidsRiceOnline.org.
Sauk Rapids-Rice Education Foundation Provides Classroom Grants

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the Sauk Rapids-Rice Education Foundation. We recognize that the success of our students, schools, and district does not happen by accident. The Sauk Rapids and Rice community’s continued support has propelled our district and foundation to new levels of higher achievement and success.

Advisory Board members are committed to creating unforgettable classroom experiences, uniting the community and schools, providing opportunities for students who need them, and investing in the future of our youngest children. Last spring, SRREF provided $2,500 in its first round of 2015 - 2016 classroom grants. The purpose of the grants is to provide funding for exceptional projects that go far beyond the district’s operating budget.

SRREF is proud to announce a second round of classroom grants totaling $3,000 in early 2016. Sauk Rapids-Rice teachers can apply for up to $500 to provide special opportunities for students to learn and excel. These grants will likely be awarded in February and additional funds are expected to be made available next fall.

We encourage everyone to consider contributing to the SRREF to support student learning and success in this unique way. Together we bring LEARNING TO LIFE.

The process is easy. Simply make your contribution, with a check payable to the Initiative Foundation – SRREF or donate online. If you choose, you may designate your tax-deductible donation to the SRREF by specifying a school or special program. Undesignated gifts are divided equally between the Annual Fund and the Endowment Fund.

Please use this form and send your contributions to:

Sauk Rapids-Rice Public Schools
c/o SRREF/ISD 47
1833 Osauka Road NE
Sauk Rapids, MN 56379

Or, go to www.givemn.org/srref to contribute online.

If you are interested in a contributing an endowment or larger gift of stock or real estate, please contact the district office at (320) 258-4703.

Thank you for investing in our children.

For more information, visit the District website at www.isd47.org/srref.
Mark Your Calendar and Save These Dates

“Colors on the Rapids” Winterguard Show | March 19, 2016
1:00 p.m. performance at Sauk Rapids-Rice High School
Tickets: $8 Adults | $6 Students and Seniors | Kids 4 and Under Free

“Rock The Sauk” Drumline Show | March 6, 2016
1:00 p.m. performance at Sauk Rapids-Rice High School
Tickets: $7 Adults | $5 Students and Seniors | Kids 4 and Under Free

Celebrate Sauk Rapids-Rice
April 15, 2016
Begin at 5:30 p.m. at Sauk Rapids-Rice Middle School
Join us for this community celebration of generations and cultures with food, entertainment and informational booths.
This event is open to the public.

District Directory

District Office ........................................ 253-4703
Dr. Daniel Bittman, Superintendent of Schools
Kim Eisenschenk, Business Manager ........................................... 253-4703
Sandra Haller, Special Education Coordinator ........................................ 253-4703
Teaching and Learning ........................................ 253-4703
Jenny Bushman, Director

High School ........................................ 253-4700
Erich Martens, Principal
Karl Nohner, Assistant Principal
Tanya Peterson, Assistant Principal
Luke Lutterman, Activities Director

Middle School ........................................ 654-9073
Nate Rudolph, Principal
Jessica Messerich, Assistant Principal
Rich Spiczka, Activities Director

Mississippi Heights Elementary ..................... 252-0122
Sue Paasch, Principal
Pleasantview Elementary ........................................ 253-0506
Aby Froiland, Principal

Rice Elementary ........................................ 393-2177
Dr. Christina Bemboom, Principal

Community Education/Facility Use .................. 258-1577
Nicole Wilke, Director

Early Childhood ........................................ 255-8910
Julie Midas, Director

Sauk Rapids Recreation ................................ 258-1577
Dave Hiedeman, Director

Rice Recreation ........................................ 393-2280
TBD, Director

Buildings and Grounds ................................ 253-4703
Greg Robbins, Director

Student Assistance ...................................... 258-1730
Jennifer Kenning, Coordinator

Food Service ........................................ 253-3628
Sheilli Graham, Director

KidStop
Pleasantview ........................................ 259-0421
Mississippi Heights ................................. 257-0570

School Bus Questions/Concerns
For school transportation questions/concerns, contact MTN, 252-2828 or Kim Eisenschenk, 253-4703.

Board of Education
Mark Hauck, Chair
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Jan K. Solarz, Director

District News is the official publication of Sauk Rapids-Rice Public Schools. District News is coordinated by the Community Education Department and published three times yearly by Sauk Rapids-Rice Public Schools, 1833 Osauka Road NE, Sauk Rapids, MN 56379.
We’re Looking for Great Volunteers
Are you one of them?

Just one hour or a hundred hours, the staff and students of Sauk Rapids-Rice School district very much appreciate volunteers.

The volunteer program is an integral part of providing a quality education for students. You really can make a difference!

To ensure the safety of our children, all volunteers will need to complete the Volunteer Program Form online, and SRR requires background checks for all volunteers. As is the case in neighboring school districts, volunteers will be responsible for paying for their background checks ($14.00), which will be “valid” for three (3) years.

To do this, please complete the 2015 - 2016 Volunteer Program Form at www.isd47.org/departments/volunteer.

We recognize the important role our volunteers play in the success of our children and understand the fee may be burdensome financially, but feel strongly that the safety of our children must continue to be our top priority.

People interested in volunteering can access and complete the background check and Volunteer Program Form through the District Website at www.isd47.org/departments/volunteer.

Dr. Daniel Bittman Named 2016 Superintendent of the Year

Congratulations to Dr. Daniel Bittman, Sauk Rapids-Rice Superintendent, for being selected as Minnesota’s 2016 Superintendent of the Year by the Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA)!

As Minnesota’s nominee, Dr. Bittman is a candidate among other state winners for National Superintendent of the Year, which will be announced in February. Nominees are evaluated on Leadership for Learning, Communication, Professionalism, and Community Involvement.

Dr. Gary Amoroso, MASA Executive Director, stated, “Since Day One, Dr. Bittman has had a positive impact in the District – I am very pleased to see him become a great leader at Sauk Rapids-Rice Public Schools and within the surrounding communities. He is highly respected by his colleagues in Minnesota and we are proud to have him represent our administrators as Minnesota’s Superintendent of the Year.”

Dr. Bittman consistently articulates organizational purpose and priorities, and works diligently to provide increased access and opportunity for all. He identifies and interacts with internal and external stakeholders extremely well and sets a precedent for others to follow. He promotes a positive image of schools and the district at all times, and always makes students his number one priority. He works tirelessly and enthusiastically for our children, schools, District, and Community.

Through his leadership and expertise, his staff, the District, and Community have flourished. We are excited about what is happening in Sauk Rapids-Rice and know that superintendent leadership makes a difference.

The District will host a gathering to celebrate Superintendent Bittman and the Sauk Rapids-Rice School District in the near future, which will include representatives from the Minnesota Association of School Administrators and the Department of Education. Stay tuned for more information.

Again, congratulations to Dr. Bittman and the Sauk Rapids-Rice School District. It is a great time to be part of the STORM.