

A photograph of four young men participating in a tug-of-war competition in a gymnasium. They are all pulling on a thick rope with effort. The boy in the foreground on the right is wearing a black tank top and blue jeans, with black face paint under his eye. The boy next to him is wearing a grey hoodie and blue jeans. The boy in the background is wearing a plaid shirt and a black beanie. The boy on the far left is wearing a black t-shirt and black shorts. The gymnasium floor is polished wood with orange and black markings. In the background, there are banners that say "STATE CHAMPS" and "STATE RUNNER-UP".

T-BIRD TIMES

A Publication of the Iola-
Scandinavia School District

Fall 2023

One, Two, Three!

Thunderbirds Pull Together for Homecoming Fun

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District Update

Dear Students, Parents, and Community Members:

The Iola-Scandinavia School District is fortunate to have a dedicated staff, engaged parents, and supportive community. We would like to continue our efforts to give our students the best well-rounded education that we can. To prepare for this, we are updating our long-range plans and we need your input so the plans reflect the community's priorities.

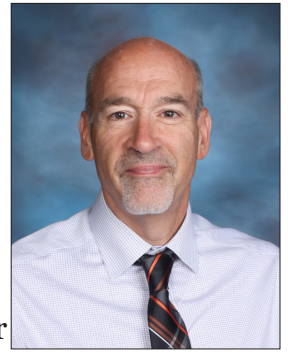
Every household in the district should have received a mailing and/or an email with a survey from the Iola-Scandinavia School District in mid-October. If you have already taken the time to complete this survey, thank you! If you did not complete the survey yet, we would really appreciate it if you would take a couple minutes to give us your feedback.

The survey deadline is October 30. For your convenience you can take the survey digitally or you can simply complete the paper survey. If you complete the paper survey, you can drop it off at any school office or mail it in the included pre-paid envelope.

The results of the survey will be available in November. The school board and administration will review the results to determine future plans. Once we have a direction on these topics for the future, we can communicate more specifics of any projects and how they can be financially supported. We will continue to keep you informed of the direction that the gathering of this information will take us.

On another note, the weather has changed along with the leaves on the trees. It seems like just yesterday it was a balmy 85 degrees and the students were beginning their first day of school. November is knocking on the doorstep and there are many things that come along with it.

The most obvious is the cold weather. Please take care to ensure that your children are dressed appropriately for their wait for the bus and their trip to school. If your student needs a winter jacket please let one of the school offices know and we can assist you.



If you have a student driver, remember to have them pack a cold weather kit in their vehicle in the event that something would happen on their trip to or from school. Big winter boots and gloves may not be fashionable, but they certainly come in handy when you are stranded in a snow-bank.

Be sure to check the I-S Thunderbird App, the Iola-Scandinavia School District website, or the Iola-Scandinavia School District Facebook pages for weather delays and/or cancellations. Cancellation or delay information will also be sent to most local Green Bay and Wausau TV stations as well as WDUX 92.7 radio.

As always, I invite you to visit our website www.iola.k12.wi.us. You will find valuable current information about our schools and district throughout the site.

You may also be interested in following the district on social media via Facebook and Instagram. You can also download the I-S Thunderbird App to your phone to get important information and updates.

Finally, I would encourage you to take an active role in the Iola-Scandinavia Schools so that we can continue to provide a great education in a great place. Go Thunderbirds!!

Chris Nelson
District Administrator
Iola-Scandinavia School District

Finance Update

School Tax Levy and Assessed Property Values

The fall is a busy time of year in the business office as we complete student counts, update budgets, and prepare to set the tax levy. Earlier this month, the Wisconsin Department of Revenue certified property values with a 16.98% (average) increase for municipalities in the Iola-Scandinavia School District. However, under Wisconsin's revenue limits and as noted in this article from the Wisconsin Policy Forum, property value increases do not directly result in increased school taxes.

The amount of tax Wisconsin public school districts are able to levy is "capped" under the revenue limit and as of the date this article is being written, the Iola-Scandinavia School District's proposed tax levy is a 2.8% increase from the previous year. Also, under Act 19 in the 2023-2025 biennial budget, the School Levy Tax Credit

was increased by 23.4% for fiscal year 2023 (\$255 M) so it's likely that an increase in the Iola-Scandinavia tax levy could be offset by the additional School Levy Tax Credit funding. (The School Levy Tax Credit is paid to municipalities, not the school district, so the actual impact won't be known until tax bills are issued in December.)



If you have questions on this or other school finance related topics, please check out our website or contact me at 715-445-2411 or thiels@iola.k12.wi.us. Wishing our students and staff a successful 2023-24 school year!

Sarah Thiel
Business Manager

Food Service Update

Greetings Thunderbirds! School is in full swing as we enter into the fall and winter season.

Iola-Scandinavia is participating in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast program for the entirety of the 2023-24 school year. This means that meals provided will be charged to students based on their eligibility for free, reduced price or paid. Students that are eligible for reduced meals will receive breakfast at no charge. Households are encouraged to apply for free or reduced price meal benefits at any time throughout the year.

We are still dealing with the same challenges as we have had in the last several years which includes nationwide supply chain and product availability. Some food and beverage products

don't always arrive as scheduled, or do not arrive at all. Due to these unforeseen circumstances, last-minute menu changes and product substitutions may occur. Be assured meals will remain balanced, healthy, and plentiful. We ask for patience and understanding as we do our best to meet your children's needs.



Breakfast and lunch menus are posted on the District website, Facebook page and the "Dining" section on the District's app. Please contact me at (715) 445-2411 ext. 1430 or pedersend@iola.k12.wi.us with questions.

Diane Pedersen
Food Service Director

Elementary School Update

With a change in the weather, Thanksgiving will be here soon, and November is a time of giving thanks. There are many things to be thankful for this school year. I'm thankful for our hard working staff and supportive parents that make I-SES a great place.

I appreciate our hard working students that show up everyday eager to learn and filled with enthusiasm. Our staff and our families are truly amazing and go above and beyond each day to help every child be successful, and for that I am grateful.

At I-SES we focus on responsibility. The ability to respond appropriately when making decisions. We all want our children to grow up to be responsible adults and productive citizens in society. We want them to feel, think, and act with respect for themselves and others. Responsibility is a skill that develops over time as people grow and mature. The great thing about this journey is that practicing responsibility is all about choices.

We have a great opportunity to praise children for making good choices and to teach and counsel them when they make mistakes. That is what growing up is all about! I would encourage you to talk about the importance of responsibility and challenge your students to think about the choices they make and what it means to be responsible.

Parent-teacher conferences are set for Dec. 7 and Dec. 11 and are a vital opportunity for us to collaborate and ensure your child's success in elementary school. These meetings provide a platform for open communication, allowing us to discuss your child's academic progress, strengths, and areas of growth.

Your involvement in these conferences fosters a strong partnership between home and school, reinforcing the importance of education in your child's life. We encourage your active participation as it empowers us to work together, ensuring

that your child thrives academically, socially, and emotionally.

Please make sure your child is prepared for the cold and snow! All students go out for recess if it is 0 degrees or warmer. As the weather gets colder, please remember to send cold-weather clothing to school with your child every day. A warm jacket, mittens or gloves and a hat are necessary this time of year. For snowy or very cold days, you will want to make sure your child comes to school with his/her snow pants and boots. Students may bring rollup sleds to school.

Thank you for being an integral part of our school family, and together, we look forward to making October a month of inspiration, learning, and countless smiles. As we move forward, please take care of yourselves and your families. Your well-being is very important to us, and we appreciate you being a part of our Thunderbird Community.

Warm Regards,

Stacey Wester
Elementary School Principal



Look at this gourd-geous Pumpkin Patch our elementary school students created!

High School Update

In the Back-to-School issue of the T-Bird Times I gave you a glimpse into the quiet work that happens in our school during the summer. Staff and students have been back in full force and while there is still a lot of work happening it isn't always quiet. Our students bring a wonderful energy into the building.

My favorite part of the day has turned out to be lunchtime. Many students probably feel the same way, but our reasons are most likely different. I enjoy using that time to chat with students on their turf, make connections, and learn their names.

In this edition of the T-Bird Times, I would like to continue with the theme of giving you a glimpse into our school. In this edition, glimpses that go directly into the classroom. Parents and Guardians should have recently received a link to Schoology and a parent code that allows access to a student's classes on Schoology. Parents with an account will be able to see what topics their student is learning, assignments, and calendar with due dates. Parents will be able to message the teacher directly in Schoology if they have questions.

Parents will not, however, be able to see their student's grades in Schoology. Official grades are kept in Skyward. "If you want to see WHAT your student is doing, look in Schoology. If you want to see HOW your student is doing, look in Skyward." While it is not required that parents set up a Schoology account, I certainly hope that they will. Both students and schools benefit when parents get involved.

The mission of Iola-Scandinavia Middle/High School is to "empower all students to explore, grow, and thrive in the world." It is our goal that all students are college and/or career ready when they graduate.

"Careers" courses are required for all eighth and

10th graders. This year, a new tool was added for students to use in all grades. They were shown how to use it on the first day of school. While there is no option for parents to create an account, your student can show it to you by logging into their Xello account. Inspire WI is a network that connects local employers with students and teachers. Their goal is to provide meaningful career exploration experiences through job shadowing, company tours and online interview practice to name a few. They also maintain a job board for employers looking for employees, interns, and apprentices. Students are able to research careers based on their interests and find jobs in the area.

Please use these tools as a way to start a conversation with your student about what is happening in their classrooms and where they see themselves going in the future. If you need any help registering for a Schoology parent account or accessing Inspire WI with your student, please contact me.

Jan Bue-Wells
Middle/High School Principal



The high school yearbook staff visited Wisconsin Rapids to work on ideas for this year's book.

Community Service Day

The morning of October 4 marked another successful Community Service Day for Iola-Scandinavia High School.

Students participated in 15 projects in the Iola and Scandinavia area, including trail maintenance at the Iola Winter Sports Club, highway clean up and community raking. Community Service Day was organized by the National Honor Society and has been the organization's signature project for 10 years.

"It's such a great experience," said junior McKenzie Bonikowske. "It brings you so much closer to the people in your community and school. It's just a great way to repay everyone for all that they have done for us."

Many other students who participated in the Community Service Day expressed similar sentiments.

"For me, Community Service Day was very positive because I was able to put a smile on people's faces and help them," said German foreign exchange student Mia Heitmann.

Members of the community also appreciate what the students do to clean up the Iola and Scandinavia area and expressed their appreciation.

As the Community Service Day continues to be a success, National Honor Society is always looking for new projects! Contact Tamela McCartney (mccartneyt@iola.k12.wi.us) or Travis Bassett (bassettt@iola.k12.wi.us) with any suggestions!



FCCLA Update

As we are settling into this new school year we would like to keep everyone up to date on what is currently happening in our school district's FCCLA organization.

This year we are welcoming many new members into our organization including some new leaders. For the 2023-2024 school year we would like to welcome our leaders: Vivian Stelse, Myah Heschke, Maci Heschke, Maddie Much, Kyleigh Knutson, Jordynnn Sullivan, Hailey Johnson and Avah Weinreis.

We would like to remind those who are interested in competing at FCCLA Regionals to see Mrs. Bestul to discuss your ideas.

Coming up there will be a Fall Leadership Conference held on October 25 at UWSP. Students will learn about FCCLA and leadership activities to take back to their chapters and schools.

We also have some fun projects planned for this



year as well as a few upcoming fundraisers. We welcomed back the teachers with a little gift of appreciation. Our community service projects this year will consist of Ringing Bells for the Salvation Army, the Needs drive for the Waupaca County Humane Society, the Iola Dog Park and many more so stay in touch with us to hear more about these activities.

Our fundraisers will include Ruby Red cranberry products and Kwik Trip car wash and gift cards that are perfect for stocking stuffers Christmas season so keep us in mind for holiday shopping.

Hailey Johnson and Jordynnn Sullivan

DECA Update

A new academic year promises big things for Iola-Scandinavia's DECA chapter. The school's business and marketing student organization has a full schedule of competition, community service, and leadership development events on tap for the upcoming year.

New this year for I-S DECA is the Stock Market Game, in which students grades 7-12 develop and manage an online investment portfolio of stocks, bonds, and mutual funds, starting with \$100,000 in hypothetical funds. Just shy of 70 students signed up to participate in the competition, which runs until Dec. 8. Students who finish among the top 25 in the Central region qualify for the International Career Development Conference in Anaheim, Calif.

October brings DECA's signature community ser-



vice event, Trick or Can. DECA typically collects nearly 2,000 items for the Iola Food Pantry, and we expect this year to be no different. In early November, nearly 30 students will travel to Wisconsin Dells for the Emerging Leaders Conference, back for the first time since 2019.

DECA competition dates fall in January (districts), February (state), and April (international). We are looking forward to seeing how our students stack up with the best and brightest from our area, state, and nation.

Miranda Bruno is this year's I-S chapter president, joined by officers Zander Thoe, Bethany Schmoldt, Jessica Schmoldt, Ryan Kampert, and Avah Weinreis. With any questions regarding I-S DECA, contact advisor Scott Tappa at tappas@iola.k12.wi.us.

Cross Country Update

The I-S cross country teams have had an exciting season so far. Athletes from middle school to the varsity teams have shown big improvements since last season and have continued to improve throughout this season's meets.

We started off the season with our home invitational at the Iola Winter Sports Club. Notable performances included a new course record set by Charlie Vater with a time of 15:45 and a top 15 finish by returning sophomore Ben Beck.

At the Manawa Invitational the following week, our teams had the opportunity to race through the Symco Thresheree Grounds. Despite the hot temperatures, they used the race to practice team tactics. The varsity girls are experts at the pack run, and have used this strategy to push each other to new personal bests throughout the season.

This was followed by two Saturday meets: the SPASH meet hosted at Standing Rocks County Park and the Smiley Invitational at Wausau East. Both meets bring together some of the best teams and individual runners in the state. At Smiley, Charlie Vater broke another meet record by running 15:26, eight seconds faster than the record previously held by Olympian Chris Solinsky. Freshmen standouts Revyn Schrank, Jack Beck, Henry Vater, and Evan Linjer continued to improve throughout the middle of the season as they adapted to the extra mile of high school races compared to middle school.

At Assumption, Ruby Koch broke 30 minutes for the first time with an assist from Abby Isermann and Kelly Jones, yet another example of how team tactics have helped the varsity girls consistently improve. Ben Beck and Henry Vater both placed in the top ten at Assumption.

The Rosholt Invitational on September 28 was a great opportunity for our athletes to showcase their fitness. Nearly every middle school athlete came away from the meet with a new personal best, while the varsity runners had the chance to preview their competition ahead of our Conference meet, which will take place on October 12 in Rosholt.

The team continued to show big improvements as the

regular season drew to a close at the Weyauwega-Fremont Invitational on October 6. With stellar performances from Ben Beck, Jack Beck, and Henry Vater, the varsity boys all finished under 19 minutes for the first time this season.

Conference will be held in Rosholt on Thursday, October 12. Charlie Vater will be going after his third consecutive Conference championship, while several athletes on both the boys and girls varsity teams will be chasing all-conference awards.

The Sectional meet is on Saturday, October 21 in Colby. The top two teams from our Sectional along with the next five individual athletes will advance to the state meet in Wisconsin Rapids the following weekend.

Katelyn Hoffman
Cross Country Coach



Football, Volleyball Update

The Iola-Scandinavia football team won its first conference championship since 2020 and advanced to the WIAA playoffs after a one-year absence.

In their season opener, the Thunderbirds defeated defending state finalist Shiocton before dropping games to three top teams, Wittenberg-Birnamwood, Colby, and Abbotsford. I-S then went undefeated in conference play, sweeping Assumption, Loyal, Rosholt, and Pacelli before ending the regular season with a victory over Kingdom Prep Lutheran.



The Central Wisconsin Conference-Small title was the school's 16th conference title. In the playoffs, the Thunderbirds traveled to Cambria-Friesland for Level 1 of the Division 7 tournament.

Musical Update

Iola-Scandinavia Musical Theatre Department is pleased to announce that they will be performing FOOTLOOSE: The Musical. Mark your calendars to catch one of their four performances: Friday, February 16, 2024 at 7 p.m., Saturday, February 17, 2024 at 2 p.m. or 7 p.m. or Sunday, February 18, 2024 at 2 p.m.

Auditions will be held Monday October 30 for students in grades 7-12 who wish to try out for one of the 23 speaking roles. Any students grades 7-12 are welcome to join our ensemble cast or stage crew. Practices will begin November 6, 2023. Get ready to cut loose and join us for this



Weston Knorr and Alex Shelley were senior members of the team.

Volleyball

After winning several matches in non-conference play, I-S struggled in conference play. The Thunderbirds were eliminated in the first round of the playoffs by Shiocton.

Senior members of the team included Maci Heschke, Myah Heschke, Kyleigh Knutson, Mad-die Much, Julia Munoz, and Zoey Wanserski.



musical this winter.

Stage Adaptation by Dean Pitchford and Walter Bobbie. Based on the Original Screenplay by Dean Pitchford. Music by Tom Snow. Lyrics by Dean Pitchford. Additional Music by Eric Carmen, Sammy Hagar, Kenny Loggins, and Jim Steinman.

This edition of the T-Bird Times was designed by Willow Otremba, Jordynn Sullivan, Ethan Lasescki, and Jayden Johnson.