



ZEPHYR TRACKS



News of the Benton School District

2024-2025 School Year is in Full Swing!

Visit us online at
www.benton.k12.wi.us
& check us out on
Facebook!

MEET OUR NEW STAFF!



Greg Bockhop
Head Custodian



Kiera Holzemer
4th Grade



Sarah Santiago
3rd Grade



Brenda Jakel
Librarian



TraiAnn Callan
Paraprofessional



Emma Zinkle
BACPAC Assistant



Rebecca Peterson
Speech/Language Pathology



Jordan Kieler
Office Admin

Not Pictured: Nathan Schadle - Custodian

Mr. Bastian



From the Administrator



-Superintendent-

As we enter the New Year, the staff and students in Benton have a lot to be grateful for.

Our teachers and support staff are doing great things in the classrooms and our District Report Card reflected their efforts. Our elementary school received a grade of Exceeds Expectations (four out of five stars), our middle school received a grade of Meets Expectations (three out of five stars), and our high school received a grade of Exceeds Expectations (four out of five stars). Our district earned an overall rating of Exceeds Expectations and we have one of the best report cards in the area. Success like this takes the efforts of every employee in the district from the teachers in the classrooms to those that are working behind the scenes every day. The School District of Benton will continue to graduate great young men and women far into the future. I am very grateful for the adults that work in the Benton School District.

On Sunday, December 15, we had our PK-6 Holiday Concert. It was standing room only in the elementary gym. The students and staff did a great job to make this event possible and we appreciated the support from the community. We followed that concert with our 5-12 Holiday Band Concert on Tuesday, December 17. The concert was an excellent show. We once again had great support from the community. Thanks to Ms. Callan and all that helped to make both concerts possible. Our students are making progress in the music program every day.

I would also like to give a big shout out to our students for giving back to the community that supports our school in so many ways. We had dozens of students show up at Leifker Enterprises at the crack of dawn to pick sweet corn. This was for the annual fund raiser that benefits the Benton Fire Department. Many of the same students and countless others helped out the Benton Fire Department again during the Labor Day weekend events. I was very proud to see the list of the students that volunteered their time to make these events possible. This is just two examples of how our kids give back to the community. We are doing a lot more at Benton than just producing good test scores. We are producing great young men and women.

Lastly, the Board takes the safety of our students very seriously. They are working to make improvements that will help secure the school and keep our children safe. The Board continues to make decisions that are in the best interest of the students in the School District of Benton.

The support of our community continues to be amazing. None of the things we accomplish would be possible without your support. Thanks to all of you for continuing to make the education of the students in the Benton School District a priority.

It is always a great day to be a Zephyr!

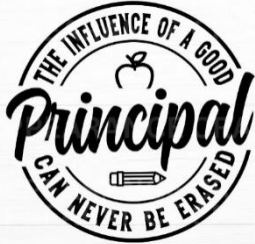
Todd Bastian
Superintendent

From the Principal

Mrs. Lawrence



-Principal-



Dear Parents, Students, and Staff,

As we reach the midpoint of the academic year, I wanted to reflect on our progress and share important updates with you. Your support and engagement are vital to our success.

1. Attendance Update

- Importance of Attendance: Daily attendance is crucial to success in academics. Just missing two days a month can add up to eighteen days a year, thirty hours of math instruction, and up to sixty hours of reading and writing instruction.
- Current Attendance Rates: Our attendance rate in the district for the 2022-23 school year was 95.1%.
- Attendance Rules: Attendance regulations can be found on a separate page in this newsletter. Knowing the difference between an excused absence and an unexcused absence can make a difference in your child's success in school.

2. Engaging the Community

- Upcoming Events: Parent-Teacher Conferences—February 19 & 20
- Volunteer Opportunities: High school students are encouraged to volunteer in the community to earn Silver Cord hours. If you have events that our students can assist with, please contact me or contact a student.

3. Academic Progress

- Curriculum Updates: Elementary staff have implemented new procedures in response to ACT20 mandates. Our students will undoubtedly benefit from this effort.
- Assessment Information: The State of Wisconsin Department of Instruction released all school report cards in late November. As a district, we scored in the Exceeds Expectations category. This rating is a four out of five-star classification. I am super proud of our staff and students for excelling!

4. Looking Ahead

- Goals for the Second Half of the Year: We are always looking for improvement in academics, facilities, and communication. If you have suggestions, please let us know. Our community is the heart of what we do, in making the best decisions for our kids.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our students' success! Together, we can create a positive and productive learning environment for all.

Warm regards,

Lisa M. Lawrence, PK-12 Principal

**BENTON SCHOOL
DISTRICT**

HOME OF THE BENTON ZEPHYRS



From the Front Office

Becky & Jordan



-Front Office Admin-

Becky and Jordan are busy as always in the front office keeping up with staff and students! We are excited to have a new joint email address so you can get ahold of Becky and Jordan by emailing office@benton.k12.wi.us for all of your questions/concerns and absence inquiries. Remember, if you can, please notify us as soon as you know that your student will be absent. Our attendance line is available 24/7 by calling the school at 608-759-4002 and pressing the prompt for attendance. Reminder, students cannot handle medications; they must be brought to the office by the parent/guardian. If you intend for your child to take any medication at school whether it be prescription or over the counter, we need to have parent and or doctor permission to do so. Please contact us if you have questions. We look forward to having a successful school year and watching the students flourish!

Classroom Happenings

Mrs. Ward



-Title I-

Eight students attended CESA3's Quiz Bowl competition on November 8. The 8th grade team of Henry Calvert, Aubryana Wetter, Brinley Krueger, and Mason Runde placed third amongst twelve schools. Congratulations to them! The 7th grade team of Quinn Williams, Khloe Neis, Nicolas Flatley, and Adalyn Keleher also did well against the tough competition. The 8th grade team wagered conservatively during the Final Jeopardy round and it paid off! Some of the favorite topics were sports, astronomy, and math. Ask one of the students what the final question was! "Which state has the most lakes?" Would you know the answer? Hint: It is not Minnesota!





special **education**

— ♥ —

Mrs. Keleher



We have had a very busy and fast first quarter in Elementary Special Education! We spent most of the first quarter gathering baselines and testing to check back in after summer break. Students have been working hard on building foundational skills in areas like reading and math by learning new spelling patterns, reading with automaticity, math facts, and discovering new trade books. We have a hard-working group of students who come in daily with a positive attitude and are ready to work. We are looking forward to making strides in their personal goals and seeing exciting growth and progress through the 2024-2025 school year!

-Elementary Special Ed.-



Mrs. Palzkill



What is Special Education? (The Basics)

Special Education encompasses a variety of services designed to support students with disabilities in achieving success within the school environment. Instead of a one-size-fits-all approach, these services are tailored to each student's unique needs as outlined in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The IEP is developed by a team that includes, at a minimum, a general education teacher, a special education teacher, a school representative (LEA), and the student's parent or guardian. Additional members may participate based on the student's specific requirements.

-High School Special Ed.-

To qualify for special education services, a student must meet eligibility criteria under one of the 13 federally defined categories outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This legislation mandates that public schools provide special education services to students with disabilities from ages 3 to 21.

Benton School District's amazing special education team consists of Melissa Keleher, Special Education Teacher; Erin Palzkill, Special Education Teacher; Rebecca Peterson, Speech and Language Pathologist; Bridgett Wilson and Julie Redfearn, Occupational Therapy; Samantha Boll and Sharron Van Pelt, Physical Therapy; Angel Walsh, School Psychologist; Katherine Strong, Special Education Director; and paraprofessionals Lynne Willis, Dana Ahlstrom, John Straus and TraiAnn Callan.



Miss Acherman



-Pre-Kindergarten-

Miss Acherman's 4-K class has had a great start to the school year! The main goal for preschool students is to foster a love of learning. Students have been exploring letters, numbers, and name writing while also developing social skills like sharing, taking turns, and problem-solving.

A unique aspect of preschool is learning through play. Students choose which "center" they would like to play in daily. Centers include art, reading/writing, exploration (STEM), building, and dramatic play. Through role-playing, students engage with real-world scenarios while building academic and social skills. Every month or two, the 4-K classroom creates a new dramatic play center based on the season and key skills they are learning about. Students collaborate to set up each center, which promotes learning across subjects like math, science, and literacy. During play, students also learn to self-regulate, take turns, share, wait, control their impulses, and appropriately express their feelings and ideas. 4-K students are like sponges, and I can't wait to see all of the learning they will continue to soak up this school year!





Mrs. Bader



-Kindergarten-



As we reach the halfway point of the kindergarten year, it's the perfect time to reflect on the incredible growth and milestones that our young learners have achieved so far. This year has been one of exploration, discovery, and building foundational skills that will set the stage for lifelong learning. In these first few months, our students have worked hard to establish routines, learn classroom expectations, and create a sense of community. The kindergarten curriculum has introduced students to a variety of subjects in an engaging and hands-on way. Students have been immersed in a variety of activities that build their early foundational reading skills. Now, they are beginning to both read and write independently. The joy of reading books together and celebrating each small step in literacy has been a highlight. In math, through counting, sorting, and patterns, our students are building a strong number sense. Curiosity has driven our lessons in understanding the world around us during our time in science and social studies. Art, music, and imaginative play have been integral to our daily activities. These moments not only allow students to express themselves but also foster problem-solving, collaboration, and emotional growth. Their creativity knows no bounds, and we're thrilled to nurture it. As we move into the second half of the year, we're excited to continue building on this solid foundation. Our goals include expanding literacy and numeracy skills, introducing new themes and projects that ignite curiosity, and preparing students for a seamless transition into first grade!



Mrs. Lierman



-First Grade-

** First Grade: A Fantastic Start to the School Year!**

As we dive into the school year, we are thrilled to report that our first graders have had an incredibly busy and educational start! They have been hard at work mastering their addition and subtraction facts, which has set a strong foundation for their math skills. Furthermore, students have been eagerly learning sight words and practicing their oral reading, boosting their confidence and literacy skills. It's wonderful to see their progress and enthusiasm as they engage with different activities that promote learning in a fun and interactive way. We have celebrated lots of academic achievements by having a slime party and a popcorn party.

Beyond academics, our classroom has been buzzing with creativity! Students have enjoyed making delightful bats out of socks, crafting thankful trees, and creating adorable stuffed turkeys. In a nod to the festive season, the first graders also created their own balloons inspired by the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, sparking their imagination and teamwork. We even celebrated a milestone with a fabulous 50's themed party to mark the 50th day of school!

We got out of the classroom with our first class field trip to Vesperman's Pumpkin Patch. We got to take a wagon ride, pick out a pumpkin, ride the zip line, and play around the farm! We also celebrated wrapping up our first quarter by heading to the movie theatre to watch *Hit Pig*.

The first few months of first grade have truly been outstanding, and we can't wait to see what learning adventures await us in the coming weeks! Thank you for your continued support.

Warm regards,
Mrs. Lierman & The First Grade Crew

Welcome To FIRST GRADE





-Second Grade-

Second Grade Scoop

Second Grade is off to a terrific start! We have celebrated many successes. Students all met their AR goal and improved their STAR test scores so we celebrated with a ball/balloon party! Students had amazing behavior for the first quarter so we got to go see *Hitpig* in theaters. Students had a spooktacular time celebrating the Knights during homecoming!

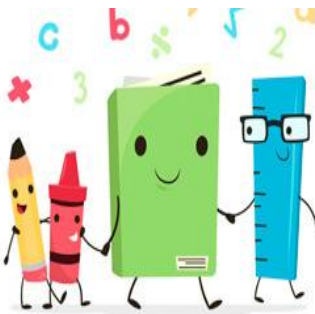
In social studies, we learned about heroes. A few heroes we studied were Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr., Clara Barton, Squanto, Albert Einstein, and many more. We were actually invited to visit the fire station where we were able to meet some of our community heroes and firefighters. We also learned about fire safety. We decided to invite a few of our personal heroes in to talk to our class about their jobs and why they were heroes. Students were left inspired to make a difference and wrote "thank you" letters to Veterans. Along with our Hero unit, we had a hospital classroom transformation. Students rotated through hands-on authentic stations and got to experience what it would be like to work in a hospital setting. Some of the stations were Pharmacy Arrays, Compound Word Reconstruction, Mixed Up Main Ideas, Suffix Surgery, and Text Feature Surgery.

In science, we have explored the different states of matter. We made oobleck! We also explored reversible and irreversible changes in matter by enjoying popsicles and popcorn.

In reading and writing, students have been studying the different types of genres and even got to publish their own book, titled: *Zephyr Dreams*. Students researched their possible career choice and wrote about what they wanted to be when they grew up.

In math, students got to play games related to our concepts such as addition, subtraction and place value.

Students have been working hard in all subjects and have learned a lot along the way. Keep up the outstanding work, Second Graders!





Mrs. Lyne



-Third Grade-

Mrs. Santiago



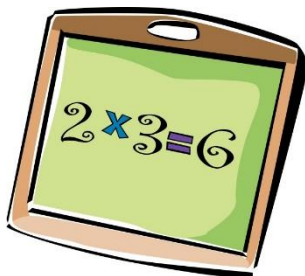
-Third Grade-

The third graders have been having a wonderful year! We spent the first few weeks practicing routines and procedures in the classroom. We celebrated Homecoming week with dress-up days and joined the parade in our Halloween costumes. We took a trip to the Benton Fire Department for Fire Prevention Week and learned about the importance of smoke detectors in our homes. The students even got to spray the fire hose!

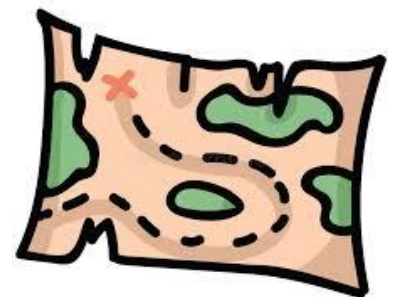
We have been learning about many new topics in reading and math. We are currently working on multiplication and division. Third graders aim to memorize all multiplication facts, so when you see one of them, ask them to tell you a few facts! We have studied historical fiction, realistic fiction, and narrative nonfiction in reading. We wrote a persuasive text about a haunted house for sale and are now practicing writing strong paragraphs. Our weekly stories have had many themes such as friendship, the importance of voting, and following your dreams.

In science and social studies, we have been learning about maps and communities, magnets, and life cycles of plants and animals. Students enjoyed exploring activities with magnets, reading and interpreting maps, and learning about natural resources.

We are looking forward to the rest of the school year!



THIRD
Third grade
GRADE



Ms. Holzemer



-Fourth Grade-

4th Grade News:

Exploring the U.S. and Beyond!!

The 4th grade class has learned a lot already this year, but here are some recent highlights! We've been on a fantastic journey across the United States. The young explorers have been diving into the regions of the U.S., learning how to identify state names and their locations on the map. It's been amazing to see their faces light up as they discover where their favorite places are located.

In addition to our geography adventures, we've been enjoying the heartwarming story of *Because of Winn Dixie*. The students have been captivated by Opal's adventures with her dog, Winn-Dixie, and the friendships they form along the way. It's wonderful to see them engaged in discussions about the book's themes of kindness, community, and understanding.

We can't wait to see what the rest of the school year has in store as we continue our learning journey! Thank you for your support!

HAPPY LEARNING!



Mrs. Neis



-Fifth Grade-



Fun Times in Fifth Grade!

Fifth grade got off to a fantastic start with 11 students. It is an exciting new year and we welcomed a new fourth grade teacher next door, Ms. Holzemer. She is doing a fantastic job! We change classes three times per day and we love it. We travel to Mr. Neis for social studies, Ms. Holzemer for reading, and Mr. Savala is once again our science teacher. We spend the rest of our time with Mrs. Neis. Specials include art, music, guidance and P.E., and this year we have added Spanish and band to our schedule. Time flies because we are always busy!

We have been very fortunate to have participated in several activities thus far. We began with our annual participation in the Homecoming parade. We definitely helped "scare up a victory" with some pretty cool Halloween costumes.

For science, Mr. Savala planned a wonderful and educational trip to the Mississippi River Museum in Dubuque for the fifth and sixth grade. We enjoyed learning more about the history of our area and how the Mississippi River was important in its development. We were also excited to touch the stingrays!

To wrap up the first quarter, students traveled to Millennium Cinema in Platteville to enjoy the movie *Hit Pig*. They were also treated to popcorn and pop! Students are learning the value of hard work and good behavior. Thank you to all who have dropped off cans; it helps us make these events possible and more affordable.

Our two rules in fifth grade: Work hard and be nice to people!

Mr. Savala



-Sixth Grade-

The 6th graders are off to a great start this school year. In science class, our students have been focusing on biology. We have had the chance to practice using microscopes and viewing samples at a cellular level. We also had great hands-on science experiences on our trip to the Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium. Some of our brave students touched the stingrays and anemones in the aquariums touch tank. Back in our classroom, the students have recently created DNA origami to help give my classroom some additional science decorations. I am looking forward to even more fun science experiences in the second half of the school year.

Mr. Savala



Mrs. Hulse

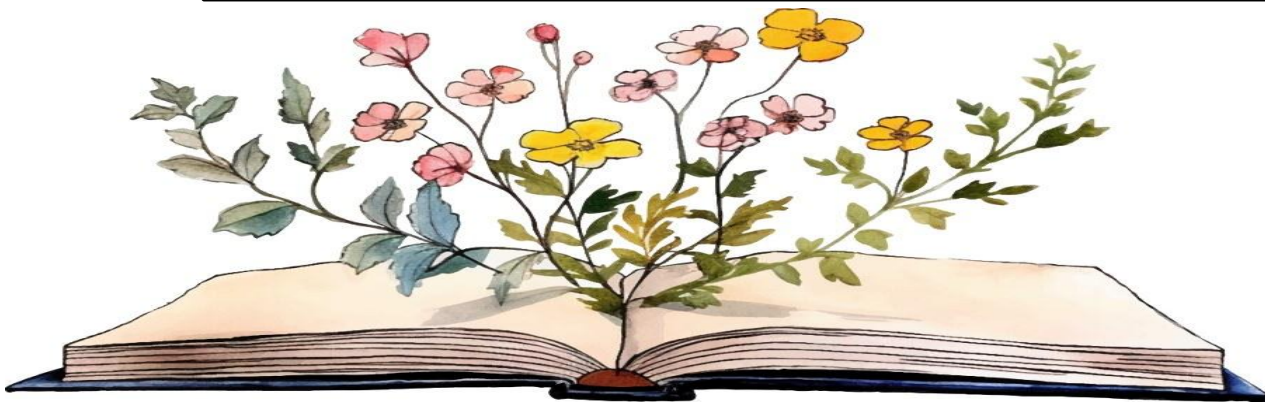


-Title 1, Reading-

Mrs. Hulse's Room

The seventh grade students have been working hard in their literature and language classes. During the first quarter, they wrote creative writing stories, which are always fun to read. They also read *Toll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* by Mildred D. Taylor. So far in the second quarter, they have written argumentative letters about a topic they feel passionate about and will start reading *Buried Onions* by Gary Soto.

The eighth-grade students have also been working hard! Along with their creative writing stories and argumentative essays, they have read *Among the Hidden* by Margaret Peterson Haddix and *Coraline* by Neil Gaiman. They will also get to watch the movie, *Coraline*, and compare it to the book.



Mr. Tyson



The middle school students celebrated the completion of the first quarter of the school year with a trip to Cherry Lanes in Dubuque. It was a great time and everyone enjoyed the afternoon out of the building. Students are already looking forward to the end of the second quarter reward which is skiing at Chestnut Mountain!

-Math, Science, Interventionist-



Mr. Droessler



-High School Phys. Ed-



Each spring and fall, our seventh and eighth grade students have the opportunity to go fishing at Apple Canyon Lake with the assistance of the Benton Izaak Walton League and the Apple Canyon Lake Bass Club. Students are taught basic knot tying and casting techniques in Mr. Droessler's Physical Education classes and then given the chance to apply these lessons on the water. Mr. Tyson and Mr. Strause also added to the educational experience by teaching a lesson as well. All students and helpers were treated to a wonderful meal after the fishing experience, courtesy of Mr. Bastian, Darrell Jansen and the eighth grade class.

Thanks to all of our helpers and chaperones! We are already looking forward to our next fishing outing on May 28th, 2025!

-Mr. Droessler



Mrs. Peterson



-Speech Therapy-

In our speech therapy room, we use different toys and games to offer students "brain breaks" and reward their hard work. Jenga is a popular one with our older elementary students! This might be the tallest tower we've seen to date!



Mr. Kern



-Phys. Ed., Health, Social Media-

This year, the Benton School District Hall of Fame welcomed an exceptional group of alumni, whose accomplishments span from athletic prowess to significant community contributions. Our 2024 inductees are celebrated not only for their remarkable achievements during their time at Benton but also for their ongoing impact in their communities and professions.

Chris Redfearn, Class of 1989, is recognized for his athletic excellence and his continued involvement in local sports, particularly through officiating various athletic events. His record-setting performances in the 1600-meter and 3200-meter runs remain unbeaten, a testament to his enduring legacy at Benton.

Emma Lawrence, a 2018 graduate, has been inducted for her dominance in track and field and basketball during her high school and collegiate years. With multiple state championships and All-America honors, Emma's athletic and academic achievements have left a lasting mark on our community.

Pat Neis, Class of 1978, is honored for her dedicated career in education and her vibrant leadership within Benton. Her efforts to enhance student experiences and foster school spirit have made a significant impact on generations of Zephyrs.

Jim Kluge, from the Class of 1987, distinguished himself in track and field and continues to influence young athletes as an educator and athletic director. His records in the long jump and triple jump are a highlight of his athletic career at Benton.

Bob Haffele, a 1976 graduate, is recognized for his extraordinary coaching career, leading his teams to numerous state championships and setting records that stand to this day. His leadership and strategic insights have shaped the careers of many athletes and coaches.

These distinguished individuals exemplify the spirit of excellence and community that defines Benton. We are proud to honor their achievements and the indelible marks they have left on both our school and broader communities.

This was the inaugural year of the Benton Hall of Fame and the application period will be sometime in August/September next year. Candidates do not necessarily have to be a graduate of Benton School District. Anyone that has made a positive impact in our school can also be recognized.

BENTON ZEPHYR

EMMA LAWRENCE



PAT NEIS



JIM KLUGE

CHRIS REDFEARN



BOB HAFFELE

HALL OF FAME

Mr. Brant



-School Counselor-

Elementary Guidance:

The first quarter we talked about skills for learning. The skills included how to be a good listener, how to focus our attention, how to use self-talk, and to be assertive.

In the second quarter, we transitioned into discussing strong emotions and how to manage strong emotions. We've discussed how we can tell that we are having strong emotions and what steps to take in order to calm those strong feelings down.

Junior High Guidance:

We have been doing career exploration. Each student completed a career interest inventory to see what careers matched their interests. They also presented to their class one of the jobs that they matched with via Google Slides presentation.

Careers:

The high school students started the semester by learning about how to find job ads and fill out job applications. We then created our own resumes and learned how to prepare for interviews. We also discussed entrepreneurship and different forms of businesses. The second quarter, we've been practicing filling out tax returns. Currently, we are discussing budgeting and different forms of financial institutions.



Mrs. Toomey-Adams



-English-

From the English Classroom...

The Communications class recently participated in a unit on running a mock trial. Students, six seniors, were broken into two teams and argued cases. They had to organize arguments, weigh testimony, and pose objections to questioning. Each student was asked to act as both a witness and an attorney. They had to direct and cross-examine witnesses, and act the showman during opening and closing statements, the only times they were allowed to directly address the jury. We talked about the importance of remembering that defendants in this country are innocent until proven guilty, and concepts like "the burden of proof" and "reasonable doubt."

We ran two such trials. The teams remained the same, but we swapped them between prosecution and defense. We even called in other classes to participate as the juries. The first case saw the freshmen Algebra I students come in with Mr. Ihm to act as jury, and the second time had Mr. Droessler and his Current Issues class (with a few study hall kids to round us out). Even though they weren't being graded on their participation, the jury members were all great sports about it, asking questions when they needed to, and leaving great comments on their notes. It was clear that everyone was getting into their roles.

The defense, perhaps unsurprisingly, won both trials, but the whole experience sparked a lot of interest in courtroom dramas, and even a few students to consider a future studying law



Mr. Ihm



-High School Math-



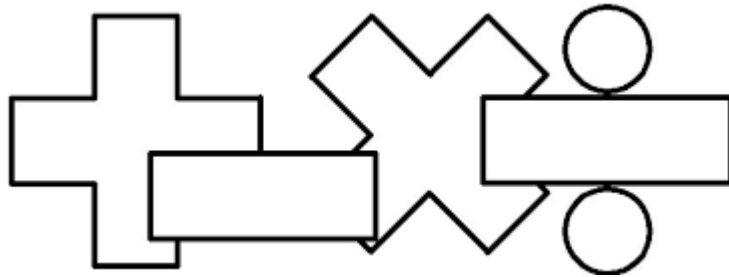
Mr. Neis



-Social studies, History-

Geometry

At the beginning of November, geometry students were beginning the chapter on Logic and Reasoning. Students were forming conclusions by looking at patterns, solving logic puzzles, and using facts and properties. Prior to Thanksgiving, students were connecting the idea of postulates and proofs to the game Uno. After a day of playing for fun, we looked at the game through the eyes of mathematicians. The rules of laying down cards—same color, same symbol, and wild cards—were treated as universal truths; these are called postulates. We played again, this time, providing a reason for why we laid down a card. This was our introduction into proofs. Proofs are forming conclusions using logical reasoning to *prove* an idea. As we close out the chapter, we will build the skill to write two-column proofs. Then, as we go through the rest of the year, each chapter will give students the opportunity to practice writing two-column proofs and discovering new theorems and relationships between figures.



This year is off to a great start in my Government class! We took a field trip to the Lafayette County Courthouse in Darlington on November 13. The students got to hear from all of the departments of the county as well as tour the courthouse and the jail. The county jail was the student's favorite part. It is usually an eye opening experience for students to see and hear from the officers working. They also got to sit in on a 911 call with the dispatchers and see how they operate!

-Mr. Neis



Mrs. Liddicoat



-Art-

The art room is having a ton of creative fun this year so far. To recap just a few things; the 2nd graders made their own mugs and we had a hot chocolate party to use our mugs! The 7th graders are making paper mache giant heads. The stained glass class is working on a 3D container. One large project that elementary did was the bulletin board in the elementary commons area. We had a photoshoot and talked about the different poses and actions that they could be doing in their part of the village. The students were such great sports and took on the photoshoot with great attitudes! When I finally had it all up in the commons area and the kids came into school they were so excited to see themselves on the board! It was a labor of love to get that accomplished! We can't wait for the rest of the year to keep on being creative!



Ms. Callan



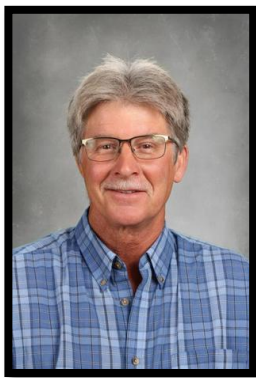
-Music/Band-

The first semester of our 2024-2025 school year has been an exciting one in the music department. Our older band students performed their first ever pep band at the homecoming football game and spent the rest of the fall preparing for the holiday concerts in December. Down in the elementary, our 2nd through 6th grade students had the opportunity to compose their own holiday songs, showing off impressive originality and musical understanding.

This school year also marks the return of the high school band to Benton, and it's been thrilling to see their enthusiasm and progress. The music department as a whole continues to grow, with more students joining band in 5th grade and sticking with it as they age.

As we begin moving into the next half of the school year, we look forward to more performances and, hopefully, some more firsts. It's been an inspiring year so far, and I'm excited for what's to come!

Mr. Austin



-Industrial Arts-

This semester, students in Mr. Austin's welding classes had the unique opportunity to learn from industry professionals. John Deere employees visited the classroom twice, sharing their expertise and providing valuable insights into the field of welding.

Throughout the semester, students honed their skills by practicing various techniques and working on hands-on projects. The recent upgrade of the welding equipment in the shop has significantly enhanced the learning experience, allowing students to tackle new and exciting projects. The enthusiasm for mastering welding skills is evident, as students eagerly engage with the updated tools and guidance from seasoned professionals.

This collaboration has not only enriched the students' educational journey but also sparked greater interest in welding as a potential career path!



Miss Hundhausen



-Spanish-



Our trip to España

Last July, 2023, several Bentonites went on an educational trip to Spain. Ours was not a group of experienced travelers; many students and their parents and grandparents had acquired their passports and were traveling for the first time! For many it was the first time going to an airport. We experienced going through security, flying for 9 straight hours, and finally going through immigration in another language after an exhausting day of travel.

By the time we arrived in Madrid, it was early in the morning and scorching hot. We met with our tour guide, Alicia, hastily stowed our luggage at the hotel, and set off to see more of Madrid than many locals had even seen. On day one, alone, I can recall: a Spanish “mercado” (marketplace), passing the Royal Palace and gardens, a 1,000 year old ancient Egyptian structure in the middle of a gorgeous green park overlooking the city, and eating churros with chocolate. The next day, we took pictures at the bullfighting ring, and had a tour through the magnificent: El Prado museum with its famous Goyas, Velazquez and Rubens. Later in the evening, we ate the famous Spanish dish: *paella* and saw a wonderful flamenco show. We even did a bit of dancing ourselves, though few may admit it.

Leaving Madrid, we were immediately plunged into Spain’s diverse past in Toledo (the once capital of the country). Many of our group, including myself, loved this city the most. With its well-preserved dusky medieval structures, packed tightly together on a large hill, (forcing us to constantly be walking upward), the city was like something out of a movie. There, our group was able to experience the religious diversity of Spain’s Medieval past—Gorgeous mosques, churches, and synagogues filled the imagination with wondrous images of that time of cultural peace.

On to Granada, which is located in the southern part of Spain, the history and the architecture became more *Moorish* (Islamic). There, we were able to see the intimidatingly stunning “*Alhambra*”: the palace of the once great Islamic royalty of Spain, and their “Generalife” Gardens. This palace defies description. Though once unimaginably painted in brilliant colors, it now remains a sand-like color, covered in intricate ornate tiles, sculpted centuries ago. Sans images on this structure, the beauty of God for the muslim people was represented by symmetrical perfection and mathematical symbolism. For example: a certain number of flowers to represent an important number in Holy Scripture, a perfect 8 sided Arabic star, etc. Honestly you’d better just look it up because I’m doubtful I can give it justice.

In Barcelona, we were able to see many of the famous architectural works of their beloved architect: Antoni Gaudi, including his gigantic, unfinished, masterpiece, the *Basilica Sagrada Familia*. The Basilica is a work of abstract genius that depicts the life and death of Christ in its design. On one side—(*sunrise*) on the facade of the entrance, we saw the depiction of his birth, and the unique stained glass of the windows gleamed inside in bright greens and blues. On the facade of the exit, (*sunset*), we passed through the crucifixion, where stained glass would later gleam in bloody hues of red and orange—Sunrise, sunset.

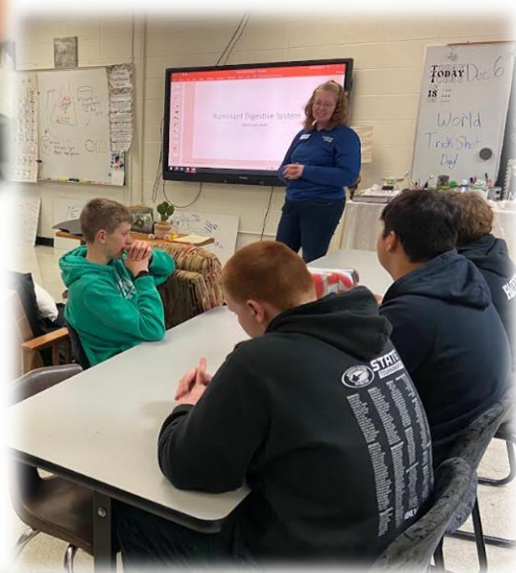
The trip was truly magical, and as a language teacher, my hope is that our school will continue to plan such important cultural/language trips. To our brilliant students and their families, whether in Spanish class or otherwise, consider taking a trip to a new place! Adventures and experiences await those brave enough to chase them.

Mrs. Boardman



-Science-

The Biology 9 class had a guest speaker during the month of December. Christina Winch from SWTC, spoke on the Ruminant Digestive System. Students were given the opportunity to explore with hands-on models and apply their learning experience.



Nurse Neis

Messages from Nurse Maggie



Annual Physical Exams

Please make sure your child has an annual physical exam before the start of the school year. This ensures we have up-to-date health information on file.



Immunizations

Keep track of your child's immunization schedule and ensure they are up-to-date on all required vaccinations. You can and are **encouraged** to send vaccination records to the school at any time throughout the year to make sure we have your child up to date in our records!



Illnesses

As always, we encourage you to monitor your child's health closely and keep them home when they are sick.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any health concerns or questions! The best way to reach me is via email (mneis@benton.k12.wi.us) as I am not at school everyday.

Attendance Reminders 2024-2025

On any school day that a student is absent, the parent/guardian is to notify the school office at 759-4002, **before 10:00 A.M.** on the day of each absence to inform school officials of the absence and the reason for such absence. The school has an answering machine to make this requirement more convenient to comply with. If there is no communication from a parent/guardian by 10:00 A.M. the student will receive an unexcused absence for that day.

Parents or guardians are requested to make medical, dental, and other professional appointments during non-school hours. (If your child does need to leave during the school day he/she should bring a note to the office before school from a parent or guardian and obtain a pass to be dismissed from class. This helps keep class interruptions to a minimum).

A child may be excused if a note is received **in writing** from his or her parent or guardian **before** the absence. A child may not be excused more than ten (10) days in a year under this section.

When returning to school after an absence, students must report to the office before going to class **with a written excuse** from a parent or guardian indicating the day and reason for the absence. An email may also be sent from a parent to office personnel. If a written excuse is not presented upon return, a student has 24 hours to present a written note or they will be issued a discipline referral. **For an absence to be considered excused, there must be a written record of that absence on file in the office within 24 hours.** Even if a phone call is received, a written excuse is still required.

It is the student's responsibility to contact the teacher(s) to make arrangements for making up work missed during an absence from school.

If a child accumulates five or more days of unexcused absences in a semester, the pre-truancy process will be started by the school district.

A student must be in attendance by 11:22 (5th period) to participate in an after-school program. Please note that school attendance is additionally addressed in the Extra-Curricular Code Handbook.

Mrs. Jakel



-Librarian-



This winter, our library has been buzzing with some exciting STEM projects!

The sixth graders took on the challenge of building a life-sized gingerbread house. With some help from the junior high students, they decorated it beautifully, showcasing teamwork and problem-solving skills. Let's just say, assembling it was as much about engineering as it was about holiday cheer!

Meanwhile, our fourth graders got crafty, learning how to make stunning 3D snowflakes. These intricate creations now hang in the library, adding a frosty, festive touch that will last all winter long.

Not to be outdone, the fifth graders dove into a lesson on textures. They crafted gingerbread men and women with all sorts of interesting textures for our younger students to explore-an interactive, hands-on way to learn!

These projects are as fun for me as they are for the students. Watching their creativity and teamwork come to life is the sweetest part of the season!



Chef Angie



Angie, Gina and Katie here!!

The School Breakfast Program, funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, plays a crucial role in making sure kids get the food they need to focus and excel in the classroom. Every child should start the school day with a healthy breakfast. Studies show that students who skip breakfast generally have slower memory recall, make more errors and are more likely to be absent or tardy and to repeat a grade. Students who eat breakfast generally have better vitamin and nutrient intake, enjoy overall healthier diets and are less prone to being overweight or obese.

We celebrated National School Lunch Week October 14-18. We enjoyed having the veterans for lunch on November 11th. Thanksgiving dinner was done family style on November 22nd as pictured below. Christmas dinner was celebrated December 20th with a special pizza delivery from Pizza Hut.

Student Lunches

PK-6th \$14.50/week (\$2.90 daily)

7th-12th \$16.00/week (\$3.20 daily)

Reduced \$2.00/week (\$.40 daily)

Student Breakfast

PK-6 \$5.50/week (\$1.10 daily)

7th-12th \$6.75/week (\$1.35 daily)

Reduced \$1.50/week (\$.30 daily)

Adult Lunch \$19.25/week (\$3.85 daily)



**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE RECEIVING THE ZEPHYR TRACKS NEWSLETTER, PLEASE LET US KNOW!
SELECT YOUR PREFERENCE BELOW AND MAIL, EMAIL OR BRING THIS SLIP TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE. NO
RESPONSE WILL BE ASSUMED AS A NO AND YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER GOING FORWARD.**

Name _____



MAIL TO ME AT _____



EMAIL ME AT _____

Return this slip via email to office@benton.k12.wi.us mail to PO Box 7 Benton, WI 53803 or bring to the school office from 7:30-3:30 Monday-Friday.

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF BENTON
41 ALMA STREET
PO BOX 7
BENTON, WI 53803

CURRENT RESIDENT

BENTON, WI 53803

