



Purpose - Passion - Pride

ST. JOHN-HUDSON SCHOOLS, USD 350  
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ST. JOHN, KS 67576  
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Josh Meyer  
Superintendent

Alisa Fisher  
Board Clerk / Business Mgr.

Marla Irvine  
Treasurer / Elem. Secretary

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to ensure that students will find their purpose and become successful, lifelong learners and positive contributors in a changing world.

Board of Education

Chad Fisher  
President

Barb Alpers  
Vice President

Carl Behr

Vance Fisher

Darin Brummer

Debby Waddle

Derek Foote

# USD 350 St. John-Hudson Newsletter

January 2017

## SUPERINTENDENT'S NEWS

As we begin the new year, there is always hope for something better. Even with the troubling state budget and challenging school funding issues, this year is no different. Rep. Lewis and Sen. Taylor have their work cut out for them in the upcoming legislative session. It won't be an easy task to turn this ship around, but I am confident they can get it done.

I am asked frequently about what will happen with school finance. The block grant funding system is set to expire this year and legislators must come up with a replacement. Legislators must first deal with the looming \$350 million shortfall in this year's state budget. This is priority number one. The funding system does not matter if there is no money to fund it.



Some people talk of record spending for education while others speak up for equity and adequacy for public schools. It's always difficult to know what to believe. It's a complicated story at the state level and facts can get muddled. Sometimes it's easier to look at our situation here at USD 350.

In the 2008-09 school year, base state aid per pupil (BSAPP) was approved by the legislature at \$4,433 per student. For the current school year, we have block grant funding which has locked in BSAPP at \$3,852. If the legislature funded schools at the same per-pupil amount as the 2008-09 school year, our district would have an additional \$233,000 this year. If the base funding level from eight years ago had simply kept up with inflation, there would be over \$500,000 more for our district.

This is not a typo. Base funding for USD 350 is over a half-million dollars short of inflation from eight years ago. It is not reasonable to think that this kind of money can be injected into public schools right away. But it is important to consider what could be done with that kind of money in our district. With increased funding we could lower property taxes, give staff a pay raise that at least keeps up with inflation, replace an aging bus fleet, update textbooks and resources, hire back positions that have been eliminated, catch up on deferred building maintenance, and the list goes on.

This list shows what has been done to get by in tough financial times. I just wonder how long we can get away with simply "getting by." Our kids, our community, and our state deserve better. Ships cannot turn on a dime. The same is true of the fiscal situation in Kansas. It will not be turned around overnight, or even in one legislative session. But the ship must be turned around.

The month of January marks the annual observance of School Board Recognition Month and gives us the chance to say thank you. In Kansas, the control of school districts is vested in local communities with an elected board. Each board member is a strong advocate for continuous improvement in student learning.

In our community the board of education makes decisions that impact the future of all our children. Their job is to establish a vision for our schools, then provide guidance and direction in accomplishing that vision. They ensure that our schools are accountable to the community. They do all of this for zero pay.

The members of your school board are: Chad Fisher (president), Barb Alpers (vice president), Carl Behr, Darin Brummer, Vance Fisher, Derek Foote, and Debby Waddle. I encourage you to take a moment to thank these folks for their service to the community.



I also want to recognize those that volunteer their time to record and broadcast the board meetings to keep the public informed. Carol Riegel is at every board of education meeting to record video. Ron Culbert at the Sandyland Shepherd's Center ensures that the video is broadcast on SSC TV 3 and available online. Thank you all for your time and effort.

As always, if you'd like to visit about any of these topics or have other questions or concerns, I can be reached at 620-549-3564 or [meyerj@usd350.com](mailto:meyerj@usd350.com). I am proud to be a Tiger and proud to serve USD 350 with Purpose, Passion, and Pride.

-Josh Meyer - USD 350 Superintendent

# Foreign Exchange Students

November 14-18 was International Foreign Exchange week and St. John is lucky enough to have three foreign exchange students this year: Yukino Inamura from Japan, Lazar Popovic from Montenegro, and Dorian Berisha from Germany by way of Albania.

Yukino's parents work outside the home, her mother teaches English, and she has two younger sisters aged 15 and 13. When Yukino returns to Japan in June at age 18, she will have finished high school and go into college with the plan to major in childcare. Yukino enjoys similar activities here as she did in Japan: volleyball and basketball/handball, and playing with children/watching movies. She declares her favorite subject is Algebra and that Japan is hotter than Kansas due to the high humidity in Japan. As well, one of Yukino's most memorable experiences so far has been Halloween since Japan does

## EXCHANGE STUDENT.



not celebrate it and that St. John is very quiet compared to Japan. Lastly, she would like to let Americans know that there are no ninjas in Japan.

Lazar, as an only child, enjoys spending time with his father while his mother works for the Montenegrin T-Mobile phone company. When Lazar returns to Montenegro at age 17 in May, he will have one more year of high school to attend before going on to attend university. Lazar also enjoys similar activities here as he did in Montenegro: meeting new friends / being with friends and playing basketball/tennis. His favorite subject is also Algebra and he declares it is colder in Kansas than he thought because although Montenegro is on similar latitude, it borders the Adriatic Sea and stays warmer. One of Lazar's favorite memories has been experiencing paintball and he states that school is easier here, the people are friendlier, and there are not as many buildings here as at home. Lastly, he would like Americans to know that his country is not near Russia.

Dorian's father is a social worker and his mother teaches kindergarten while he enjoys the company of his little brothers age 14 and 2. When Dorian returns to Germany in May at the age of 16, he will have three more years of high school before going on to university to study aerospace and wind turbine engine engineering.

Dorian enjoys similar activities here as he did in Germany: football and basketball/soccer and meeting friends. His favorite subject is

Weights and he says that Germany has colder temperatures than Kansas. One of Dorian's favorite memories so far is Homecoming since he doesn't get to experience that in Germany and he states that the community he grew up in is a lot less cooperative than St. John. Lastly, he would like Americans to know that he has the awesome ability to make friends easily.



# Ugly Christmas Apparel Day



Photos courtesy Dick Smith

# JANUARY 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
1	2 NO SCHOOL Half Teacher Workday	3 Begin 2nd Semester 4:00pm HS BB (H) vs Kinsley	4 Elementary Roller Skating Grades 1-4	5 5:45pm JH BB (H) vs Kinsley	6 2:00pm Geography Bee (Grades 4-8) 4:00pm HS BB (H) vs Ness City	7 TBD - JH CPL BB @ Bushton JV East	
8	9 4:00pm JH BB @ Stafford 6:00pm BOE Meeting	10 5:00pm HS BB @ Ellinwood	11 Elementary Roller Skating Grades 1-4	12 4:00pm JH BB @ LaCrosse	13 3:00pm Jump Rope for Heart Information Meeting Grades 1-4 Small Gym ACT Registration Dead- line for 2/11/17 Exam	14	
15	16 NO SCHOOL Staff Development 4:00pm JH BB @ Central Plains	17 TBD - Mid Winter Classic	18 Elementary Roller Skating Grades 1-4	19 TBD - Mid Winter Classic	20 TBD - Mid Winter Classic	21 TBD - Mid Winter Classic SWKMEA MS & Elemen- tary District Choir @ Dodge City Middle School	
22	23 5:45pm JH BB (H) vs Macksville TBD-Girls BB Tour- ney @ Barton CC	24 TBD-Girls BB Tour- ney @ Barton CC	25 1:00pm Organization- al Pictures	26 4:00pm JH BB @ Ness City TBD-Girls BB Tour- ney @ Barton CC	27 TBD-Girls BB Tour- ney @ Barton CC	28 TBD-JH BB CPL Tournament @ Victo- ria	
29	30 TBD - JH BB CPL Tournament @ Victo- ria 4:00pm CPL Scholar's Bowl @ Kinsley	31 4:00pm HS BB (H) vs Norwich	Grades 1-4 Jump Rope for Heart				

**December 2016**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**February 2017**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

USD #350

JANUARY

2017

MENU SUBJECT TO CHANGE

MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY	
2	<b>BREAKFAST</b>	3	<b>BREAKFAST</b>	4	<b>BREAKFAST</b>	5	<b>BREAKFAST</b>	6	<b>BREAKFAST</b>
	NO SCHOOL!!!		Breakfast Pizza Peaches Grape Juice Cereal Milk		Biscuits & Gravy Applesauce Orange Juice Cereal Milk		Pancake on a Stick Pineapple Apple Juice Cereal Milk		Banana Bread Peaches Pineapple/Orange Juice Cereal Milk
	<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>
	This Institution is an Equal Opportunity Provider		Hamburger Gravy Whipped Potatoes Broccoli Applesauce Fresh Fruit Hot Roll Milk		Chicken Fajita Lettuce & Tomatoes Cheddar Cheese Corn Pineapple Fresh Fruit Milk		Chicken & Noodles Whipped Potatoes Peas Peaches Fresh Fruit Hot Roll Milk		Cheeseburger/Bun French Fries Baked Beans Pears Fresh Fruit Cookie Milk
9	<b>BREAKFAST</b>	5	<b>BREAKFAST</b>	6	<b>BREAKFAST</b>	7	<b>BREAKFAST</b>	8	<b>BREAKFAST</b>
	Breakfast Bites Sliced Pears Grape Juice Cereal Milk		Pop Tart Mixed Fruit Apple Juice Cereal Milk		Breakfast Burrito Peaches Pineapple/Orange Juice Cereal Milk		French Toast Sticks Pineapple Orange Juice Cereal Milk		Breakfast Bar Applesauce Apple Juice Cereal Milk
	<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>
	Italian Pasta Bake Lettuce Salad Green Beans Mixed Fruit Fresh Fruit French Bread Milk		Chicken Nuggets Potatoes & Gravy Broccoli Peaches Fresh Fruit Hot Roll Milk		Soft Taco Lettuce & Tomatoes Refried Beans Pineapple Fresh Fruit Milk		Chili Relish Plate Sliced Pears Crackers Fresh Fruit Cinnamon Roll Milk		Pepperoni Pizza Lettuce Salad Peas Applesauce Fresh Fruit Milk
16	<b>BREAKFAST</b>	12	<b>BREAKFAST</b>	13	<b>BREAKFAST</b>	14	<b>BREAKFAST</b>	15	<b>BREAKFAST</b>
	NO SCHOOL!!!		Breakfast Pizza Peaches Grape Juice Cereal Milk		Biscuits & Gravy Pears Pineapple/Orange Juice Cereal Milk		Pancake on a Stick Mixed Fruit Apple Juice Cereal Milk		Banana Bread Pears Orange Juice Cereal Milk
	<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>
	NO SCHOOL!!!		Huntington Chicken Lettuce Salad Green Beans Pears Fresh Fruit Hot Roll Milk		Taco Soup Relish Plate Sliced Pears Fresh Fruit Birthday Cake Milk		Chicken Fried Steak Potatoes & Gravy Mixed Vegetables Peaches Fresh Fruit Hot Roll Milk		Hamburger/Bun French Fries Baby Carrots Applesauce Fresh Fruit Milk
23	<b>BREAKFAST</b>	19	<b>BREAKFAST</b>	20	<b>BREAKFAST</b>	21	<b>BREAKFAST</b>	22	<b>BREAKFAST</b>
	Breakfast Bites Peaches Apple Juice Cereal Milk		Pop Tart Applesauce Orange Juice Cereal Milk		Breakfast Burrito Pineapple Pineapple/Orange Juice Cereal Milk		French Toast Sticks Pears Apple Juice Cereal Milk		Breakfast Bar Mixed Fruit Grape Juice Cereal Milk
	<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>
	Chicken Tetrizzini Lettuce Salad Baby Carrots Applesauce Fresh Fruit Hot Roll Milk		Bar-B-Q Rib/Bun French Fries Carrots & Celery Mixed Fruit Fresh Fruit Milk		Lasagna Lettuce Salad Green Beans Pears Fresh Fruit French Bread Milk		Chicken Strips Potatoes & Gravy Mixed Vegetables Peaches Fresh Fruit Hot Roll Milk		Sloppy Joe/Bun Tater Wedges Baked Beans Pineapple Cookie Fresh Fruit Milk
30	<b>BREAKFAST</b>	31	<b>BREAKFAST</b>						
	Pancake on a Stick Pineapple Grape Juice Cereal Milk		Breakfast Pizza Applesauce Orange Juice Cereal Milk						
	<b>LUNCH</b>		<b>LUNCH</b>						
	Cheese Pizza Lettuce Salad Peas Applesauce Fresh Fruit Milk		Cowboy Cavatini Lettuce Salad Green Beans Peaches Fresh Fruit French Bread Milk						

## ROBOTICS CLASS BUILDS, CODES, AND COMPETES

During 6<sup>th</sup> hour at St. John High school students are creating robots and code to control them. Using the VEX Robotics curriculum and design materials students have built a “basic” robot and are now engineering the robot to meet the challenges of VEX robotics “Starstruck” competition. Ryan Woodward (senior), “It is a really new experience. Something I didn’t know anything about before. It is pretty fun.”

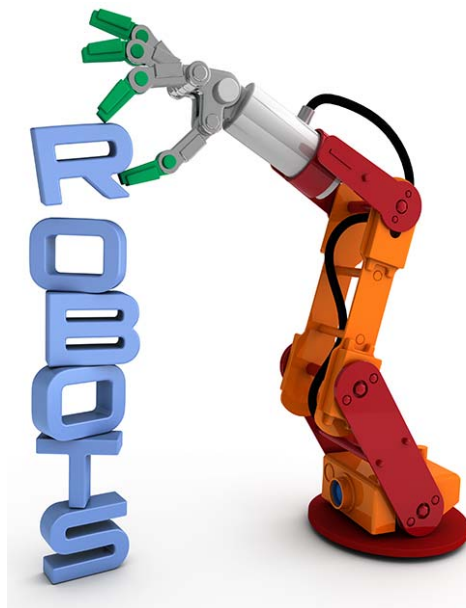
The VEX Robotics curriculum leverages the “coolness” of robotics, and the excitement of head to head competition to inspire and engage students.

Students will walk through the design and build a mobile robot to play a sport-like game. During this process they will learn key STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) principles, and robotics concepts. At the culmination of this class, they will compete head-to-head against their peers in the classroom, or on the world stage in the VEX Robotics Competition, the largest and fastest growing international robotics competition for middle and high school students.



This modular and project-based curriculum teaches the design process in an engaging, hands-on manner to help teachers challenge, motivate, and inspire their students. By moving students through an actual engineering project, students quickly understand the relevance of what they are learning. “Robotics is fun and is a great experience. It has helped me with computer coding and programming. I love it!” Ethan Huston (sophomore).

The robotics class has visited several elementary classrooms to share the robots and some basics about how the robots were built, coding, and sensor functions. The elementary students have loved interacting with



the high school students and using the joystick to control the robots.

On December 3<sup>rd</sup> six robotics students took two robot teams to compete at Hesston High School. This was the first tournament the students attended and they learned a lot. The tournament is a very fast-paced, competitive, yet friendly environment. Students and teachers from schools using VEX for several years helped rookie teams whenever and however needed. “The first one [tournament] is tough,” commented Derek Hacker (senior).



Amanda McCandless attended the event and commented, “The tournament was very interesting to watch, and it looked like the kids were having a blast. The day went quickly as there was always something going on. It was fun checking out all the different robot's designs and watching what they could do. For me, it was a nice change of pace from sitting

in a loud gym watching a sporting event, as even though it was highly competitive, I felt the atmosphere was very relaxed. If you have a chance to go watch one in the future, I'd highly recommend it.”

After attending the competition Triston Long (senior) commented, “Watching videos and building in the classroom is not enough to have a competitive robot. We needed to go to the competition so we could see what other people were doing and learn from their mistakes and our

own. Before we went we thought we had a good design. Once we got there we knew we had a lot of work to do. It was pretty stressful at times but we learned a lot and will be better next time.”

On December 12<sup>th</sup> eight of the robotics students presented to the USD 350 Board of Education. Topics they covered included: coding, competition, re-usability of materials, trouble-shooting, initial building, re-engineering, and the future of the program at USD 350. The class is taught by Andrea Sayler-Siefkes. Mrs. Sayler-Siefkes has been with USD 350 for 18 years.



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Secret Santa volunteers standing by the Secret Santa tree.

