



PIPESTONE AREA SCHOOLS District No. 2689

Sonja Ortman, MS/HS Principal
Scott Boomgaarden, Dean of Students
Tanya Schroyer, MS Counselor

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Kaysee Slaba, Social Worker
Rick Zollner, Activities Director

Principal's Board Report: September 2025

1. Kinder-buddies: We are off to another fun partnership with our kindergarten friends. We have an organized plan for the year and are excited to offer this to our seniors. Please see the attachment (next page).
2. New furniture: We are so lucky to have some modern, flexible furniture. Unfortunately, it is all expensive so we could only afford to furnish the upstairs flexible learning area and two classrooms who desperately needed an upgrade. We will continue to modernize the building as the budget allows.



"Inspire life-long learners. Build Character. Prepare them for their future."

Kindergarten Buddies 2025–2026

Date	Period/Time	Activity
Thu, Sept 18	Period 3 (10:07–11:00)	Kickoff meet & greet – buddies meet, icebreakers, classroom tour
Fri, Oct 3	Period 1 (8:15–9:08)	Fall craft & story time
Homecoming Week	Assembly (Time TBD)	Buddies sit together in the gym; short buddy games
Senior-Kinder Football Field Event (TBD)	TBD	Big kickoff event – parents, community, etc.
Thu, Nov 6	Period 6 (1:30–2:20)	Thankful turkeys project – gratitude exchange
Thu, Nov 20	Period 1 (8:15–9:08)	Buddy reading
Fri, Dec 12	Period 7 (2:23–3:15)	Winter craft & hot cocoa
Thu, Jan 8	Period 6 (1:30–2:20)	New Year goal sharing – “Wishes for the Year” posters
Fri, Jan 30	Period 7 (2:23–3:15)	Indoor recess buddy games
Fri, Feb 13	Period 1 (8:15–9:08)	Valentine exchange – buddies make cards
Thu, Feb 26	Period 3 (10:07–11:00)	Read Across America – shared reading & Seuss activities
Fri, Mar 27	Period 6 (1:30–2:20)	Spring scavenger hunt
Thu, Apr 9	Period 1 (8:15–9:08)	STEM buddy challenge – simple building activity
Fri, Apr 24	Period 3 (10:07–11:00)	Earth Day project
Thu, May 14	Period 7 (2:23–3:15)	Outdoor buddy picnic – blankets & snacks
Fri, May 22	N/A	Graduation walk-through with Kinders (final send-off event)

Academic Goal for MSHS: Focus on Literacy in All Content Areas: Increase Reading Achievement

6th Grade Reading Plus Data – Fall 2025

Current Performance

- **Average Comprehension:** 3.8 (equivalent to a late 3rd–early 4th grade level)
- **Average Vocabulary:** 6.0 (comparable to 6th grade level)

Benchmark Reading Assessment Breakdown:

- 19% of students – 5 grade levels below
- 14% of students – 4 grade levels below
- 22% of students – 3 grade levels below
- 12% of students – 2 grade levels below
- 18% of students – 1 grade level below
- 85% of 6th graders are below grade level
- 15% of 6th graders read at or above grade level

Goals for Growth (by March 2026)

- **Comprehension:** Increase from 3.8 to 5.7
- **Vocabulary:** Increase from 6.0 to 8.5

Progress will be measured through:

- Reading Plus data
- NWEA MAP Reading assessments

Strategies for Improvement

- Continued use of Reading Plus
- Implementation of READ Act strategies
- Personalized literacy instruction tailored to student needs
- Intentional use of literacy tools across content areas

Why Reading Matters at MS/HS

- **Students Enter with Wide Skill Gaps**
Reading levels range from early elementary to above grade level. Personalized instruction is necessary to support both struggling and advanced readers.
- **Reading Is Foundational for All Subjects**
Struggling readers face challenges not only in ELA but also in science, social studies, and math problem-solving.

- **Increases Engagement and Motivation**
Providing texts at the right level builds confidence, reduces frustration, and motivates students.
- **Addresses Individual Learning Needs**
Personalized strategies (phonics, vocabulary, comprehension) ensure instruction matches each student's needs.
- **Promotes Equity**
Without intervention, struggling readers fall further behind, widening achievement gaps.
- **Prepares Students for Long-Term Success**
Middle school is a critical point—students who leave middle school below grade level are significantly less likely to graduate on time.

✿ Summary:

By targeting literacy through Reading Plus, research-based strategies, and personalized instruction, we aim to significantly raise comprehension and vocabulary outcomes for middle and high school students, closing critical skill gaps and preparing all learners for success in high school and beyond.

Non-Academic Goal for MSHS: Attendance: Decrease absenteeism in MS from 6.12% to 5% by May 2026, and from 7.34% to 5.5% at the HS.

Reasoning: Regular attendance is linked to better academic outcomes. Missing school can lead to gaps in learning that accumulate over time. For instance, students who are chronically absent are more likely to struggle with core subjects like math and reading, and they face a higher risk of failing courses or dropping out of school.