

**Ribbon Cutting for HVED Campus at 1213 Gilmore Avenue, Winona, MN**

Pictured above, the ribbon cutting makes it official! On Wednesday, August 26, 2026, the ribbon was cut on the HVED Campus site at 1213 Gilmore Avenue in Winona, MN. This event symbolized years of dedication and persistence by Board Members, Superintendents, and others throughout our 12-member districts who continued to pursue the dream of one central site for special education and alternative educational program to serve the students within Hiawatha Valley Education District. The central site at 1213 Gilmore Avenue, known for years as the Winona Mall, has been transformed from a shopping mall to a customized educational setting complete with specialized sensory spaces, flex rooms, large motor activity spaces, specific service areas, and customized classrooms complete with the benefit of student and teacher spaces attached.

SAIL Students' Start of School Looks a Lot Like Fishing!

The SAIL students and staff took some time to work on skill building in the beautiful lake setting around the new HVED Campus. They were taking full advantage of the transition between summer and school with a life-long physical education activity including a fishing lesson.

Terri Kersting and Sandy Gorham Participate in Professional Networking

Story provided by Sandy Gorham: *Terri and I were attending a virtual State Vision Network meeting. The topics included state testing - MCA and alternate MCA, State Services for the Blind, Minnesota Resource Libraries, assistive technology, Communication Center Process, and Low Vision Clinic. We also have a chance for questions and answers. We had a chance to connect with each other and meet the new Teachers for the Blind/Visually Impaired and Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists.*

Pictured above at left: Sandy Gorham, Teacher for the Blind/Visually Impaired (BVI), Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS), and Terri Kersting, Teacher for the Blind/Visually Impaired.

**Mentor/Mentee Days Held on the Third Tuesday of each month as HVED Implements Sustainability**

In light of the Region 10 Mentorship Grant for the creation and full implementation of a sustainable mentorship program for special education teachers within HVED, member districts, and charter schools worth \$93,107.00 in 2026-2027, the Superintendents agreed to support this effort by providing one day a month throughout the school year where the special education mentors and mentees could gather together for a full day of mentorship, skill building, and support. The Directors of Special Education:

Dawn Kullot, Karen Polyard, Angie Uhlenborn, Tracy Tweeten-Lind, Ang Korson, Chandra Pagel and Sam Clark have been instrumental in the process through their professional training and the development of a Mentorship Guidebook, with the process of organizing these monthly mentorship days under the guidance of Dr. Micki Breitsprecher, Region 10 Mentorship Grant Facilitator. A special recognition goes to Ang Korson, SpEd Coordinator, who is taking the lead on presentations this year. We will gather on the third Tuesday of each month: September 15; October 20; November 17; December 15; January 19; February 16; March 16; April 20; May 18.

Behavior Training with Brih Design

On September 10, 18, 22, 24, and 29 HVED School Psychologists, Special Education Coordinators, Directors of Special Education, ASD Consultants, and Behavior Intervention Team members engaged in Behavior Training with Brih Design.

**Food Service Inspection Ended with a Recognition for HVED's Food Service Manager, Ann de Zeeuw**

When the Minnesota Food Service Inspector ends her first official inspection by commenting, "You are doing a fantastic job!" in reference to the dedicated and detailed work completed by our new Food Service Manager, Ann de Zeeuw, we couldn't be prouder! Ann has stepped up and into the role of Food Service Manager this year and assumed responsibilities that are very important for the smooth operation of our school food service program. Thank you, Ann!

**District Collaborative Council (DCC) Purpose Statement**

The purpose of the District Collaborative Council (DCC) is to provide shared, collaborative guidance that connects HVED administration, frontline specialized service providers, and schools we serve. Because our special education district spans highly distinct disciplines, this role ensures that systemic practices, professional development, resource allocation, and policy implementations are informed by the authentic, diverse voices of all stakeholders. Representatives advocate for their department's unique clinical and educational landscape while simultaneously collaborating on district-wide strategic goals to improve outcomes for students with disabilities across HVED and our member districts and schools.

WE ARE HVED!**WE ARE HVED!****WE ARE HVED!****WE ARE HVED!**