

# VINTON-SHELLSBURG COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

—WHERE CHARACTER COUNTS!

*"The Mission of the Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District is to improve the quality of lives and assist individuals in becoming contributing members of society through the accumulation and application of knowledge."*

## Special points of interest

- Dec. 6 - 2-Hr. Early Dismissal, Prof. Dev.
- Dec. 7 - Pearl Harbor Program @ VSMS Media Center, 12:00 pm
- Dec. 9 - School Board Meeting @ Middle School LMC, 7:00 pm
- Dec. 16 - 6-12 Band Concert, VSMS Gym, 7:00 pm
- Dec. 19 - 6-12 Winter Vocal Concert, VSHS Aud., 7:00 pm
- Dec. 20 - 2-Hr. Early Dismissal
- Dec. 23 - Jan. 3 - NO CLASSES — Christmas Break.
- Jan. 6 - CLASSES RESUME

## Vinton-Shellsburg CSD School Board

On behalf of the staff, students, and community of the Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District, we would like to say thank you to Brenda Bartz, Jason Hicok, and Kyle Schminke for their service on our school board. In Iowa, the school board is the only elected board where a member serves with no compensation – they are truly volunteers who genuinely care about the education and well-being of our students.

To the Vinton-Shellsburg School Community:

The holiday season is upon us and it is a time to be grateful for all we have. I urge you to pause and consider the things that you are grateful for - both individually and as a school-community.

November was a full month for our school district. We had school board elections earlier in the month and the new members were sworn in on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Kathy Van Steenhuyse was reelected to represent an at-large position, Tom Burke and Becky Williams were elected to represent in District 1, and Jake Fish was elected to represent District 2. THANK YOU to all who voted!

At their first meeting as the new board, Rob Levis was elected as the president and Sue Gates as the vice-president. The board plans to continue meeting on the second Monday of the month. They will generally meet at 7:00 PM but this can vary based on the school schedule and personal schedules. They work to rotate where they meet to include at least one meeting each year at each of the buildings. Their next meeting will be on December 9 at 7:00 PM in the Middle School's media center.

The board is also actively working with a search firm to hire a new superintendent for the 2020-2021 year. I recently announced my retirement after almost 11 years with the district. While I have and continue to enjoy the work I do every day, I am also ready to explore new adventures and opportunities!

We have many events happening in December. If you want to see students displaying their talents, plan to attend a music program, basketball game, wrestling meet, swimming competition...and the list goes on (just refer to the calendar).

If you have any questions about anything that has to do with the school, please give me a call or send me an e-mail. I would welcome the opportunity to sit down and visit with you. Enjoy the holidays!

Mary Jo Hainstock, Superintendent  
[maryjo.hainstock@vscsd.org](mailto:maryjo.hainstock@vscsd.org)



At the same time we say goodbye to them, we also welcome three new members; Tom Burke, Jake Fish, and Becky Williams. We look forward to your leadership in the coming years.



11-21-2019, Wow what a great service a few of the Vinton Police and Vinton Fire Department members participated in at Tilford Elementary helping serve Thanksgiving meals to students and many parents and family members. What an awesome time!!



## VETERAN'S DAY ASSEMBLY

A few highlights from the Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District's Veterans Day Assembly on November 11, 2019. We are proud to invite veterans and community members to attend as we honor military members from all branches of the services at the VS Middle School gym. The entire audience singing "God Bless the USA" is a moment not to miss especially when the recorded music ended and the audience sang even stronger. Thank you to all who serve our country.



## Students and Parents Winter Driving Safety Tips

Many areas in Iowa will soon be experiencing snow and ice, which can mean dangerous driving conditions. If you are a very experienced school bus driver, an adult driver, or if it's your first year driving, it is a good time to review some proven winter driving safety tips that might help drivers avoid problems.

1. Don't rush. When roads and sidewalks are slippery, rushing to catch the bus or driving faster to make it to your destination can have disastrous results. Leave a few minutes early. Give your child and yourself plenty of time.
2. Bundle up. Students need to keep warm at the bus stop. Make sure your child still has an adequate line of sight and can hear traffic and other noises.
3. Watch your step. Watch where you are walking, take shorter more deliberate steps. Wear appropriate footwear.
4. Be patient. School bus drivers are trained to drive in inclement weather; however, snow and icy roads can slow down even the most experienced driver. Safety is each driver's top priority and extra time may be needed to get from stop to stop. Drive slower and increase your following distance as more stopping time is needed when roads are icy.
5. Clear view of sight. Clear away snow and frost from all windows on your vehicle so that you do not have any obstructed views. Clear snow off your vehicle so that you don't put the vehicle behind you in danger from flying snow and decreasing visibility.
6. Be weather aware. Bad weather can lead to school cancellations, delays or early dismissals. Make sure your contact information is correct in PowerSchools and be sure to check local media when inclement weather is expected. Signup to get alerts.
7. Watch for school buses. Passing a stopped school bus from behind as it loads or unloads children is illegal. Don't put our children at risk.
8. Everyone plays a role in ensuring students get to school safely, so please use caution, be prepared, remain alert, and adjust driving behavior.

## 12 Ways Help your Middle School Student Be Successful at School

The goal at Vinton-Shellsburg Middle School is to create a well-rounded student who is prepared for high school. Students at VSMS have every opportunity to learn the essential middle school skills. Our belief is students learn at different times and different ways. It is our responsibility to make sure we focus on providing instruction that meets the student where they are at and take them to proficiency and beyond. When your student comes home at night, I challenge you to change your question from what did you learn today to what was your most difficult challenge? If your student cannot answer the question don't give up. Pose the question a different way, like, what is something you did in class today that you think I might not know? Engaging your student in meaningful conversation about school will show you take their learning seriously and it is one of the most important things they will do during their day. Below are some quick tips to help show, students, parents, and school are working together to provide them with the best education.

**1. Meet your child's teacher.** Stop in and visit during conferences, send emails, or visit a classroom.

**2. Attend parent-teacher conferences and keep in touch with your child's teacher.** At VSMS we have four opportunities for parent-teacher conferences each year. You can also ask to meet with your child's teacher any time during the year. If you have a concern and can't meet face-to-face, send the teacher a short note or set up a time to talk on the phone.

**3. Find out how your child is doing.** At VSMS we have the grade book online, as well as, the assignments for the day. Please check PowerSchool often and ask your student about assignments and grades, also be sure to review your child's report card at the end of the semester.

**4. Make sure that your child gets homework done.** Let your child know that you think education is important and that homework needs to be done each day. You can help your child with homework by setting aside a special place to study, establishing a regular time for homework, and removing distractions such as the television and social phone calls during homework time. If you are reluctant to help your child with homework because you feel that you don't know the subject well enough, you can help by showing that you are interested, helping your child get organized, providing the necessary materials, asking your child about daily assignments, monitoring work to make sure that it is completed, and praising all of your child's efforts.

**5. Find homework help for your child if needed.** At VSMS we know that the homework is sometimes difficult for students and parents. We have set up homework time before and after school where students can go to work on their assignments. We open the school before school at 7:30 am for homework and again after school until 4:00. Both blocks of time students can be assigned to attend or parents/ students can choose to attend.

**6. Help your child prepare for tests.** Tests play an important role in determining a student's grade. As a parent, there are a number of ways that you can support your child before and after taking a standardized test, as well as a number of ways you can support your child's learning habits on a daily basis that will help her be more prepared when it's time to be tested. Practice with your student, make sure they eat breakfast in the morning, and have a specific bedtime without TV and electronic devices are all ways you can support your student being ready for the test.

**7. Demonstrate a positive attitude about education to your children.** What we say and do in our daily lives can help them to develop positive attitudes toward school and learning and to build confidence in themselves as learners. Showing our children that we both value education and use it in our daily lives provides them with powerful models and contributes greatly to their success in school.

In addition, by showing interest in your student's education, parents and families can spark enthusiasm and lead them to a very important understanding—that learning can be enjoyable as well as rewarding and is well worth the effort required.

**8. Monitor your child's television, video game, and Internet use.** American children on average spend far more time watching TV, playing video games and using the Internet than they do completing homework or other school-related activities. Observe your student a couple nights during the week to determine how they are utilizing their time and determine if those activities are the ones that will ultimately make your student successful in school and life.

**9. Encourage your child to read.** Helping your child become a reader is the single most important thing that you can do to help the child to succeed in school and in life. The importance of reading simply can't be overstated. Reading helps children in all school subjects, more importantly, it is the key to lifelong learning.

**10. Talk with your child.** Talking and listening play major roles in student's school success. It's also important for you to show your child that you're interested in what he/she is doing throughout the school day.

**11. Encourage your child to be responsible and work independently.** Taking responsibility and working independently are important qualities for school success. You can help your child to develop these qualities by establishing reasonable rules that you enforce consistently, making it clear to your child that he has to take responsibility for what he does, both at home and at school, showing your child how to break a job down into small steps, and monitor what your child does after school, in the evenings and on weekends.

**12. Encourage active learning.** Children need active learning as well as quiet learning such as reading and doing homework. Active learning involves asking and answering questions, solving problems and exploring interests. Active learning also can take place when your child plays sports, spends time with friends, acts in a school play, plays a musical instrument or visits museums and bookstores. All of these components will allow your student to be a successful life long learner.




**SHELLSBURG BOOK FAIR IS HERE!!** December 2nd—4th  
Monday thru Wednesday: 7:30 am-8:30 am & 3:15 pm-3:45 pm; Opened up to  
5th gr. at their noon recess. Online Fair will run from December 7th-20th and  
there is a mobile app available. (<http://www.scholastic.com/bf/vsms>)

Senior Citizen Activity Passes are available for  
Vinton-Shellsburg CSD residents who are age 55  
or older; stop by the Superintendent's Office at  
1502 C Ave., Vinton.



# DECEMBER 2019



Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
<b>2 Day 6</b> ◇ 7 G BB vs. Williamsburg MS, 4:15 pm ◇ 8 G BB @ Williamsburg (Mary Welsh), 4:15 pm ◇ FFA Chapter Meeting, 6:30 pm	<b>3 Day 1</b> ◇ JV/V BOWL vs. Columbus Catholic @ Cadillac Lanes, 4:00 pm ◇ 7 G BB vs. Solon, 4:15 pm ◇ 8 G BB @ Solon MS, 4:15 pm ◇ MS WR vs. Center Point-Urbana, Marion @ Williamsburg, 4:15 pm ◇ FS/JV/V G BB vs. Maquoketa, 4:30/6:00/7:30 pm ◇ 9/10/V B BB @ Maquoketa, 4:30/6:00/7:30 pm ◇ B V SW vs. Linn-Mar & Waterloo @ Waterloo Central, 6:00 pm	<b>4 Day 2</b> ◇ Band Boosters Mtg., VSHS, 6:30 pm 	<b>5 Day 3</b> ◇ 9 B BB vs. Union @ VS MS, 4:30 pm ◇ 10/JV B BB vs. Union @ VS HS, 4:30 pm ◇ V G BB vs. Union @ VS HS, 6:00 pm ◇ V B BB vs. Union @ VS HS, 7:30 pm ◇ JV/V WR vs. Center Point-Urbana, Beckman Catholic, & N. Linn @ Center Point Urbana, 6:00 pm ◇ VOY @ State Competition, Wells Fargo Arena	<b>6 Day 4</b> <b>2-HR EARLY DISMISSAL Professional Dev.</b> ◇ 9/10/V B BB vs. Solon, 4:30/6:00/7:30 pm ◇ JV/V G BB @ Solon, 5:30/7:00 pm ◇ VOY @ State Competition, Wells Fargo Arena	<b>7</b> ◇ V WR @ Monticello Tourney, 10:00 am ◇ B V SW @ Cardinal Invite (Newton YMCA), 10:00 am ◇ Pearl Harbor Program, MS LMC, 12:00 pm
<b>9 Day 5</b> ◇ 7 G BB vs. Marion, 4:15 pm ◇ 8 G BB @ Marion (Vernon MS), 4:15 pm ◇ MS WR vs Indee & Benton @ Keystone, 4:15 pm ◇ JV B BB vs. Center Point-Urbana, 7:00 pm ◇ School Board Meeting, Middle School LMC, 7:00 pm	<b>10 Day 6</b> ◇ JV/V BOWL vs. Waverly-Shell Rock @ Berry's Lanes, 4:00 pm ◇ MS WR vs. B-G-M, East Marshall, Solon @ South Tama MS, 4:15 pm ◇ FS/V G BB @ Beckman Catholic, 5:30/7:00pm ◇ 9/10/V B BB vs. Beckman Catholic, 4:30/6:00/7:30 pm <b>HUMAN RIGHTS DAY</b>	<b>11 Day 1</b>	<b>12 Day 2</b> ◇ 7 G BB @ Mount Vernon, 4:15 pm ◇ 8 G BB vs. Mount Vernon, 4:15 pm ◇ JV/V WR Quad vs. CCA, Alburnett & S. Tama @ VSHS 6:00 pm	<b>13 Day 3</b> ◇ MS WR vs. Clear Creek-Amana & Maquoketa, 4:15 pm ◇ JV/V G BB vs. Mount Vernon, 6:00/7:30 pm ◇ 9/10/V B BB @ Mount Vernon, 4:30/6:00/7:30 pm ◇ Shellsburg 3rd-5th Gr. Dance/Movie Night, 6:00 pm	<b>14</b> ◇ V WR @ South Tama Invite, 9:30 am ◇ B V SW @ Grinnell Invitational (Grinnell College), 11:00 am ◇ V G BOWL @ C.R. Prairie Invite @ Lancer Lanes, 1:00 pm
<b>16 Day 4</b> ◇ JV WR Viking Invite @ VSHS, 5:00 pm ◇ 6-12 Band Extravaganza, VSMS Gym, 7:00 pm	<b>17 Day 5</b> ◇ Career Fair, VSHS, 8:00 am—10:00 am ◇ JV/V BOWL vs. Independence @ Lucky 10 Lanes, 3:30 pm ◇ 7 G BB @ Williamsburg (Mary Welsh), 4:15 pm ◇ 8 G BB vs. Williamsburg, 4:15 pm ◇ MS WR vs. Lisbon, Solon & CPU @ Benton (Keystone), 4:15 pm ◇ B V SW vs. Oskaloosa @ Williamsburg, 5:30 pm ◇ JV/V G BB @ Marion, 6:00/7:30 pm	<b>18 Day 6</b>	<b>19 Day 1</b> ◇ JV/V WR Double Dual vs. IC Regina & Marion @ Marion, 6:00 pm ◇ JV B BB @ Independence, 7:00 pm ◇ 6-12 Winter Vocal Concert, VSHS Aud., 7:00 pm	<b>20 Day 2</b> <b>2-HR EARLY DISMISSAL HOLIDAY BREAK</b> ◇ FS/JV/V G BB vs. Benton, 4:30/6:00/7:30 pm ◇ 9/10/V B BB @ Benton, 4:30/6:00/7:30 pm ◇ JV WR @ Iowa Falls-Alden Tourney, 6:00 pm ◇ B V SW vs. Mason City & Decorah @ Luther 6:00 pm	<b>21</b> ◇ V WR @ Iowa Falls-Alden Tourney, 10:00 am ◇ V B BOWL @ C.R. Prairie Invite @ Lancer Lanes, 1:00 pm <b>Sunday 22</b> <b>HANUKKAH BEGINS</b>
<b>23</b> <b>NO CLASSES HOLIDAY BREAK</b>	<b>24</b> <b>NO CLASSES HOLIDAY BREAK</b>	<b>25</b> <b>NO CLASSES HOLIDAY BREAK</b> 	<b>26</b> <b>NO CLASSES HOLIDAY BREAK</b> <b>KWANZAA BEGINS</b>	<b>27</b> <b>NO CLASSES HOLIDAY BREAK</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>30</b> <b>NO CLASSES HOLIDAY BREAK</b>	<b>31</b> <b>NO CLASSES HOLIDAY BREAK</b>	<b>JANUARY 1</b> <b>NO CLASSES HOLIDAY BREAK</b> 	<b>2</b> <b>NO CLASSES HOLIDAY BREAK</b>	<b>3</b> <b>NO CLASSES</b> ◇ JV/V BOWL @ W. Delaware (Lightning Lanes), 4:00pm ◇ 9/10/V B BB @ S. Tama 4:30/6:00/7:30 pm ◇ F-S/V G BB vs. S. Tama 5:30/7:00 pm	<b>4</b>

**Season's Greetings & a Happy New Year from Vinton-Shellsburg Community Schools! See you in the new year!**

District Equity Statement

The Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District provides equal educational and employment opportunities and will not illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District shall take affirmative action in recruitment, appointment, assignment and advancement of women and men, minorities and disabled. Inquiries regarding compliance with equal educational or employment opportunities and/or affirmative action shall be directed to Becky Lurgen, Equity Coordinator, Vinton-Shellsburg CSD, 1502 C Avenue, Vinton, Iowa 52349. Inquiries may also be directed in writing to the Director of the Region VII Office of the United States Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, or the Director of the Region VII Office of Civil Rights, United States Department of Education in Chicago, IL.