

Tanagers' Nest News

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Tanagers Offer Thanks in Numerous Ways

by [Jon Frey](#) on October 31, 2022

As we transition into the cooler days ahead I'll offer some thoughts on the rapidly shrinking first semester and perhaps a little of what to expect in the coming weeks and months. We have certainly been pleasantly surprised by the reasonable temps and gorgeous fall colors that have greeted us this past month. As I write this, our hallways are filled with a few ghosts and goblins enjoying the opportunity to dress up for Halloween while also

contributing to a good cause by bringing a canned food item for the Vermillion Food Pantry.

In the month ahead, we will complete our fall Smarter Balanced practice



assessments with the juniors and we will also welcome the community in for the annual Veterans Day program on Friday, November 11th. Personally, I look forward to the Veterans Day program each year because we get to showcase our musicians as they perform for the veterans and public gathered for the program. We also get to expose our students to the pride and appreciation our community has for those who served and the many who gave the ultimate sacrifice for their country. One of my earliest memories of grade school is of attending the community Veterans Day program in my hometown of Britton, South Dakota. The small gym of the school in those days also served as a civic auditorium and I can remember sitting on the gym floor, legs crossed watching the respect and honor that was shown to those veterans all those years ago. I still get the same feeling today, some forty-odd years later as the elementary school kids file into the gym and look on in awe at all that is happening around them in support of our veterans and their families.

Perhaps because of this, it is fitting that Veterans Day falls in the same month as Thanksgiving. As we consider all that we have to be thankful for, let's not forget our

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veterans and their families and the sacrifices of all those in the American Armed Forces. As I compose this, it seems so strange that we are just two weeks away from the first of these important holidays and ten days after that, we will be into the second. With the unseasonably warm temperatures fall seems farther off than it really is. Before we know it, the gym will be filled with the sounds of squeaking shoes and whistles, the temps will be up in the wrestling room and the gymnasts will once again be defying gravity! Winter sports will be here! Jazz band, show choir, speech and debate will all be kicking into action and the Tanagers will be stepping up for what I expect will be yet another solid winter of competition and academic excellence!

In this season of thanks I want to express a sincere, “Thank you” to all of you who have served or have a member of your family in the armed services and wish a Happy Thanksgiving, to one and all!

Jon

Senior Fees - A Reminder...

By [Jon Frey](#) on October 13, 2022

A number of students in the senior class, well (... most of them actually) still need to pay their \$20.00 senior class fee. This fee is used to help offset cap and gown expenditures and needs to be paid as soon as possible. If you are unsure if your student has paid this fee, please contact [Jennifer Badke](#) in the principal's office.

Build Dakota Scholarship Opportunity

By [Jon Frey](#) on October 23, 2022



On November 15th in an assembly from 10:15 to 10:45am, VHS juniors and seniors will learn about a tremendous scholarship opportunity called Build Dakota. The [Build Dakota Scholarship Fund](#) has been established to recruit graduates into high priority-high need fields here in South Dakota. Students looking to get trained to fill those careers can qualify for the opportunity to attend their post-high school preparation

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completely free. Parents and representatives of local businesses are welcome to attend the presentation.

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Native American Heritage Explored at VHS

by **Joe Delvaux - VHS Social Studies Teacher** on October 21, 2022

In 1990 President George H.W. Bush federally recognized November as National Native American Heritage month. The month of November is designated as a time to honor the rich cultural and historical contributions of America's first peoples. In South Dakota, we

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designate the second Monday of October as Native American Day. The local designation in October is a result of work done by the late Governor Mickelson and tribal leaders in 1989. Governor Mickelson's vision for this designation was to create an atmosphere of cooperation and reconciliation moving forward. He stated, "We can reason together, we can negotiate, we can dig deep in our hearts for compassion."

Keeping with the late governor's vision, we at VHS have been working to create an atmosphere that recognizes our connection to the



first people of this land every month and every day. VHS has been fortunate to have a progressive group of student leaders who facilitate a Native American Club. The club meets two to four times a month. Our district received a grant from the state to create a Great Plains History class that focuses on the history of the region. This course is heavily focused on creating a connection to and appreciation for the land we occupy and the people that have thrived here for thousands of years. Our social studies and literature courses have made a concerted effort to include materials that reflect the diversity of our nation and region. We are blessed to have a significant Native student population and community that add depth and connection to this vision.



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Chronic Absenteeism in South Dakota

by **Jon Frey** on October 15, 2022

As South Dakota emerges from the disastrous challenges brought about by the COVID19 pandemic, schools across the state are working hard to reimplement attendance expectations that were necessary to back away from over the past few years. Getting students and households in general out of the habit of regular school attendance has had a profoundly negative impact on overall school attendance. For obvious reasons, performance in the classroom has dipped, as a result.

At Vermillion High School, like every other school in South Dakota, we want to bring students back into the fold and do all that we can to address learning gaps or losses that occurred during remote or distance learning at the height of the pandemic. The South Dakota Department of Education has [a page on their website](#) dedicated to providing information regarding the impacts of poor attendance on learning and steps that can be taken to ensure students understand the importance of regular, daily attendance. It even provides a graphic that illustrates research gathered showing the potential median earnings differences over the course of a lifetime, between individuals who do not finish high school all the way up to earning a professional degree. Be sure to check it out!

Important Upcoming Dates

- November 4th - **1:30 Dismissal** - **Teacher Professional Learning Teams**
- November 11th - 9:40am Veterans Day Assembly, VHS
- November 12th - Saturday School - 8:30-11:30am, VHS Library
- November 15th - **Picture Retake Day** (Packets available in the high school office)
- November 15th - Build Dakota Scholarship Assembly - 10:15am, VHS Auditorium
- November 23rd to 25th - **No School, Thanksgiving Holiday Break**
- December 3rd - Saturday School - 8:30-11:30am, VHS Library
- December 17th - Saturday School - 8:30-11:30am, VHS Library
- December 19th & 20th - Semester Tests
- December 21st to January 3, 2023 - **No School, Christmas Break**
- January 4, 2023 - **No School, Teacher Inservice**
- January 16 - **No School, MLK National Holiday**
- February 16th & 17th - **Spring Parent-Teacher Conferences**
- March 15, 2022 - **1:30 Dismissal** - Teacher Professional Learning Teams

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- March 16th & 17th - **No School**, Spring Break
- April 6th - **1:30 Dismissal** - Teacher Professional Learning Teams
- April 7th - **No School**, Easter Holiday
- April 10th - **No School**, Easter Holiday
- May 3rd - Senior Awards Ceremony, 2:00pm, VHS Auditorium
- May 8th & 9th - Senior Final Exams
- May 10th - Baccalaureate Service for Seniors (*optional*), 7:00pm, VHS Auditorium
- May 11th - Graduation Practice (MANDATORY ATTENDANCE), 10:00am, USD Sanford Coyote Sports Center
- May 13th - Graduation 1:30pm, USD Sanford Coyote Sports Center (Doors open: 12:30pm)
- May 17th - Final Exams (Grades 9-11)
- May 18th - Final Exams (Grades 9-11)
- May 19th - Final Exams (Grades 9-11) / Final Check-out / Last Day of School

Activities News

Fall Wrap-up

by **Jason Huska** on October 31, 2022



It's hard to believe the 2022 fall activities are in the books. It feels like the athletic booster club kick off just happened! Activity seasons seem to go by faster and faster. Let's take a moment to recap a successful 2022 fall.

The boys golf team got things started this fall. Coach Kirk Hogen and the boys came home with the 2022 class A State Championship. The girls tennis team finished in 6th place at State. Coach Jensen's crew had several individual places as well. The boys soccer team once again reached the state semifinal match. Coach Nelson led the Tanagers to within one win of making it to State. The girls soccer team faced a similar finish. Coach Thomas guided the Lady Tanagers to a state semifinal match. The Tanager volleyball team had some big wins against ranked teams this fall. The Lady Tanagers

remained competitive but came up short in Regions. The boys and girls cross country teams came home with Region 3A champions. Coach Fischbach led the teams to a 5th place

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finish at State with the girls and a 6th place finish for the boys. Coach O'Boyle and the Tanager football team battled through injuries this fall. The team earned a huge win against Madison but it was not quite enough to earn a spot in the playoffs.

Trisha Fisher led Rhythm in Red to several great performances this fall including coronation, music is alive, and the Apple Polishing concert. Rhythm in Red is working hard preparing for their big Fall Show on November 18 and 19. VHS brought two quartets to All-State Choir this fall. The group was able to work with the incredible Sarah Catt from Elmhurst University. The All-State performance will be rebroadcast on SDPB Thanksgiving Day.

Mr. Garret Olson and the marching band had several great performances this fall. The pep band continues to amaze the crowds at every home event. Comments can be heard from opposing fans that include: "That is the best pep band I have ever heard", "I love coming to Vermillion to hear their pep band", and my favorite is "I wish our pep band sounded like them". Great Job Pride of Vermillion marching and pep band!

Mary Begley directed the VHS drama program to another wonderful Fall play. The cast and crew performed "The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940". The VHS Oral Interpretation team, composed of thirteen students has participated in three competitions thus far. The Readers Theatre group (Justin Mancini, Brody Askew, Jackson Speegle, & Peter Kniffen) placed first at two of the contests. In the Poetry division, Sienna Lewis received a superior award and Niu Niu Zhang placed 1st in Storytelling at the most recent tournament. The duet team (Peter Kniffen & Keaton Daniels-Heggstad) brought home 2nd place awards at two competitions. Third place was earned at a tournament by Justin Mancini & Brody Askew in the Duet event, and William Lee in the Humorous category. On Tuesday November 8, the VHS team will perform their pieces in the VHS Library from 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. The Regional Competition will be held at Vermillion High School on Wednesday November 16th.

After a successful fall season, we cannot wait to see what the winter activities will bring! We look forward to seeing everyone out at the various events. Best of Luck to all and GO, TANAGERS!

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Student Services News

By [Luke Hayes & Laura Suing](#) on October 30, 2022

Need a Tutor? How about a FREE Tutor?

The Dakota Dreams Online Tutoring Program provides free online tutoring to K-12 students in South Dakota in the subjects of English/Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Parents can register students for virtual one-on-one tutoring sessions using a simple and secure online platform. Once registered, sessions can either be pre-scheduled or accessed on-demand. All sessions are taught by university students already accepted into the School of Education at Northern State University or Black Hills State University.

<https://ourdakotadreams.com/launch-your-dream/online-tutoring-program/>

SD Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments

The SD Interim Assessments are administered throughout the year to help teachers monitor student progress and be able to choose the right assessment at the right time.

They provide educators with actionable data about student knowledge and abilities to help teachers target instruction to meet students' individual learning needs.

Items include all the accessibility resources available in the spring summative assessment to help provide accurate results for students. (<https://doe.sd.gov/assessment/>, accessed 10/20/22).

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Dual Credit Courses

Spring Dual Credit registration opens November 1st-December 20th (see Mr. Hayes).

Stay current with your course work and communicate with your instructor if you have questions or fall behind. Reach out to dual credit advisors with any concerns or questions if you are in need of help.

Scholarships

Scholarships are starting to become available. Make sure to have your student stop into Student Services or check his/her/their email for more information.

Dual Credit Speech and Pre-Calculus/Calculus

If your student is interested in taking care of that freshman speech requirement at the college or university level while still in high school, look to have them enroll in CMST 101 offered through USD, taught by USD faculty, here at VHS in the spring semester.

Additionally, Pre-Calculus and Calculus will also be offered for credit to be signed up for in the spring semester. These math courses will be taught by Mr. Settles. Have your student see his/her/their counselor for more details.

Free College Application Period

From October 3, 2022 through November 30, 2022, students may apply to as many South Dakota public colleges and universities as they wish during the free application period! For more information, please visit [Our Dakota Dreams](#).



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Student Services Important Reminders

ACT TESTING

2022|2023

TEST DATES	REGISTRATION DEADLINES		
	Regular Deadline	Late Deadline	Photo Upload Standby Deadline
September 10, 2022	August 5	August 19	September 2
October 22, 2022	September 16	September 30	October 14
December 10, 2022	November 4	November 11	December 2
February 11, 2023	January 6	January 20	February 3
April 15, 2023	March 10	March 24	April 7
June 10, 2023	May 5	May 19	June 2
July 15, 2023*	June 16	June 23	July 7

FAFSA

The 2023-2024 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) will be available October 1, 2022. FAFSA can provide your student with grants, loans, and work study funds from the Federal Government. It is best to get it done early since some of the funds are available on a first come first served basis. For a short video on how to fill out the FAFSA form, please click [here](#). To fill out your FAFSA form, please visit [the FAFSA website](#).

What are the deadlines for filling out the FAFSA form?

To be considered for federal student aid for the 2023-24 award year, you can complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form between Oct. 1, 2022, and 11:59 p.m. Central time (CT) on June 30, 2023.

Any FAFSA form corrections or updates must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. CT on Sept. 10, 2023. However, many states and colleges have earlier deadlines for applying for state and institutional financial aid, use Find your state's deadline. Check with your college or career school about its deadlines. Because of the variation in state and college deadlines, it's highly



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recommended that you fill out the FAFSA form as soon as you can after Oct. 1 to ensure that you don't miss out on available aid.¹

[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)

Vermillion High School

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¹ Federal Student Aid Website, Office of Department of Education, Accessed June 28, 2022.