

# Tanagers' Nest News

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## Winter is Upon Us ...Stay Safe & Warm!

by **Jon Frey** on November 29 2022

As I sit in my office putting this opening together for our “holiday edition” of this newsletter, It’s a bit quiet as the halls and classrooms are empty today as we settle in for our **first snow day of the 2022-23 school year**. The first of anything in a given school year always brings about questions so I figured this would be as good a time as any to share our messaging platforms that we utilize for inclement weather announcements, postponements and cancellations.

The first and best way to receive this information is via our Campus Messenger system. Messages will be sent out immediately via this system when a decision is made to postpone or cancel school and activities. **Please make sure we have your most accurate contact information.** The notice is posted on KELO and KSFY TV stations and broadcasted on KVHT (106.3 FM) and WNAX (590 AM) radio stations.

Road conditions as well as temperatures and in particular, wind chill temps ultimately factor into any decision made to postpone or cancel school and school activities. Ultimately, as a parent, the decision is yours to determine if conditions are such that you feel it is unsafe for students to attend school. School officials collaborate with law enforcement, our bussing company as well as neighboring districts to make a decision that is most appropriate for us. However, we recognize that conditions where you live may ultimately be different and as such always urge you to err on the side of caution and keep yourself and your family safe. **Let’s have a safe and joyous holiday season this year!**

*Jon*





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## Semester Exams

By [Jon Frey](#) on November 30, 2022

Just like last year, our first semester exam period will take place on Friday, December 16th at 2:10pm. This initial exam period will follow a shortened 7-period day of all classes meeting for the final time for the semester on the 16th. Semester exams will resume on Monday, December 19th at 9:00am (Period 1), 10:30am (Period 3) and 1:00pm (Period 5) and continue on Tuesday, December 20th at 9:00am (Period 2), 10:30am (Period 4) and 1:00pm (Period 6). Students can get access to their teachers from 8:00am-9:00am and 2:30pm-3:30pm on the 19th and 20th. The first semester ends at 3:30pm, December 20th.

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## Some reminders regarding testing days that we share with the students include:

- Lunch is OPEN. You may stay here or go, as necessary.
- You are *required* to remain in your classroom for the entire test period.
- You may bring with you:
  - Extra study materials
  - A book to read
- Trips to the locker, library or commons will not be allowed during testing periods.
- Students spending open periods in the building should be in the commons or library working quietly. No students should be gathering or wandering halls during test periods.
- Freshmen are REQUIRED to attend study halls, as scheduled.

## Senior Fees - Another Reminder...

By [Jon Frey](#) on November 29, 2022

We continue to have a number of students in the senior class, who 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](#) (605.677.7035) in the Principal's Office.

## Teacher Feature!

By [Amelia Howard & Kayla Kappler - VHS Teachers](#) on November 21, 2022

This month, we will debut a new newsletter segment to share a little bit of information about members of the VHS team. It seemed appropriate to start with our newest members for our initial launch so this month we will feature two of our four "newest faces!"

### Amelia Howard - English Teacher

**Where is home?** I am originally from Omaha, NE where my parents and siblings still live.

**Where did you get your (post-HS) education?** USD! GO YOTES!



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**How many years have you been teaching at VHS? Overall?** If you count my year of student teaching in 2016, then this would be my second year. However, this is my first year as a full time teacher at VHS. I have four years experience teaching in Omaha prior to coming here, this year.

**What classes do you teach?** English 1, Sophomore Composition, and American Lit!

**Did you always want to teach or did something lead to you teaching after first doing something else?** As a child I wanted to be a marine biologist because I loved sharks (and still do by the way)! Then, I wanted to be a math teacher but quickly learned math was not my strength, so I found my way to teaching English and love it!

**Do you coach any sports? Do you sponsor any activities or clubs?** I am currently the Sophomore Advisor, but outside of VHS I am the Dance Team coach for USD.

**What is your favorite part of teaching at VHS?** The students! They make me laugh every day.

**Anything else?** I teach dance at VADO and coach at USD, so anytime I am not at school I am busy dancing somewhere! I also enjoy riding my bike, walking my dog, completing sewing projects, and cooking new recipes! I also have one dog named Miley, a ten year old Beagle mix who loves taking naps, chasing squirrels, and occasionally getting into the garbage.

## Kayla Kappler - Math Teacher

**Where is home?** Baltic, SD

**Where did you get your (post-HS) education?** Dakota State University

**How many years have you been teaching at VHS? Overall?** First year at VHS; First year of teaching overall.

**What classes do you teach?** Advanced Geometry, Geometry, and Finite Math



**Did you always want to teach or did something lead to you teaching after first doing something else?** Throughout high school, I knew I wanted to do something with either math or computers. When I was a senior in high school, I decided to go into secondary math education because I always thought teaching would be a fun and rewarding career.

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**Do you coach any sports? Do you sponsor any activities or clubs?** I was the assistant girl's soccer coach last fall for VHS. I'm also one of the sophomore advisors. Last year (before coming to Vermillion), I coached girl's basketball, and I would love to coach basketball again at some point.

**What is your favorite part of teaching at VHS?** My favorite part of teaching at VHS is the opportunity to teach advanced classes. I enjoy challenging students and watching them take the challenge head on.

**Anything else?** I've always been big into basketball. I played for many years on several different teams. I still enjoy shooting hoops in my free time. I also love math (which may seem obvious since that's what I teach). I loved taking math courses in college and talking about problems with other students. My favorite math classes were Trigonometry, Calculus, Game Theory, and Differential Equations. My other hobbies/interests would include golfing, shopping, traveling, spending time outside in the summer, spending time with family, playing with my dog, and watching TV. I have one sister, named Kendra. She is 3 years younger than me and is currently a student at the University of Sioux Falls. Along with my sister, my family consists of my mom and dad. I also have a dog, named Bailey. She is a 7-year-old Cocker Spaniel.

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## Safe2Say: An App for Students to Report Concerns

by [Aaron Armstrong, VHS School Resource Officer](#) on November 28, 2022

Vermillion High School recently held an assembly for students regarding a new anonymous reporting platform called "SAFE2SAY," which is being implemented throughout South Dakota. During the assembly, the Director of the South Dakota School Safety Center, Brett Garland, talked about the platform with the entire student body.

The idea behind the system is to encourage students to report things that they would otherwise feel uncomfortable reporting directly. Things like bullying, school violence, domestic abuse, or suicidal ideations are some of the things that have already been reported across the state.

Reports can be made in one of three ways. Students can download the SAFE2SAY app, use the SAFE2SAY website, or call 1-844-373-7233. A trained analyst with the state monitors



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incoming reports via all three avenues and will ask any clarifying questions to the person making the report if more information is needed.

Once this information is collected, they will forward the report to the specific location of the concern. If the matter reported does not involve an immediate safety concern, the information is shared with the school administration where the student attends for further investigation. If the matter involves an immediate or potential safety concern, the information is shared with the local communication center, which will send the appropriate resources to follow up on the concern at the time the report is received.

The platform is not designed to replace reporting concerns directly to teachers, school administration, or the school resource officer (SRO). We still encourage and prefer that students report any concerns directly to a trusted adult. During my time as an SRO, students have shared various concerns with me, which we want to see continue as it is the best way to address concerns quickly. SAFE2SAY is simply another avenue for students to use if they are uncomfortable directly reporting a concern, so the matter is still investigated, and the proper assistance provided.

You can learn more about SAFE2SAY here [South Dakota School Safety | Home \(sd.gov\)](https://www.sd.gov/school-safety)

## Important Upcoming Dates

- December 3rd - Saturday School - 8:30-11:30am, VHS Library
- December 7th - Native American Advisory Meeting - 5:30pm, Jolley Elem. 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
- 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**

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- 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

## Join the Native American Advisory

There will be a meeting from 5:30pm to 6:30pm on Wednesday, December 7th of the Native American Parent Advisory in the library at Jolley Elementary School. The focus of the meeting will be to develop a focus for the group and to discuss a dinner to be planned for January. Please consider joining us and sharing your experiences and ideas! Snacks will be provided!

## Activities News

### Winter Activities Begin

by **Jason Huska** on November 28, 2022

December brings with it the start of winter activities. This includes boys and girls basketball, gymnastics, wrestling, show choir, holiday concerts, and one-act play.

Oral Interp will compete at State on December 2 and 3 in Mitchell. Gymnastics will be hosting their annual Winter Wonderland Invite on December 3, at 11:00 am. This great tradition started back in 1999. Several of the best teams from all over South Dakota will be coming to compete. Vocal and Instrumental activities begin with their annual Holiday concert on December 6th at 7:00pm. Not to mention our famous pep band who will be performing at the boys and basketball games throughout the winter season. The boys and girls basketball teams will host their second annual Holiday Classic at USD's SCSC on December 17. Invited teams will be from Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, and South Dakota. The Tanager wrestlers will begin their season on Saturday December 3, at the Sioux Falls Roosevelt Invitational.



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We look forward to seeing everyone out at the various events. Best of luck to all and GO, TANAGERS!



Vermillion High School Student Services Office 605.659.8513 (ph) / 605.677.7042 (fax)  
[Luke Hayes](#), School Counselor (A-K) - [Laura Suing](#), School Counselor (L-Z)  
[Rebecca Olson](#), Administrative Assistant

## Student Services News

By [Luke Hayes & Laura Suing](#) on November 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.



Vermillion High School Administration 605.677.7035 (ph) / 605.677.7042 (fax)  
[Jon Frey](#), Principal ~ [Jennifer Badke](#), Administrative Assistant  
[Jason Huska](#), Assistant Principal / Activities Director ~ [Jasmine Stewart](#), Administrative Assistant



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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.

## 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 now 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.

## Student Services Important Reminders

### ACT TESTING

2022|2023

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

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## 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 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.<sup>1</sup>

[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)

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## Vermillion High School

1001 East Main Street, Vermillion, SD, 57069  
605-677-7035

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<sup>1</sup> Federal Student Aid Website, Office of Department of Education, Accessed June 28, 2022.