

Tanagers' Nest News

It's Been a Great Start to 2023-24!

With the 2023-24 school year just about two and a half weeks old, we feel good about proclaiming that we're off to a great start!

by **Jon Frey** on Aug. 29, 2023

You may be starting to hear about a multifaceted project we've dubbed "TransformED" that brings to Vermillion a community-centered, schoolwide design project modeled on a similar project in Finland. This project comes about as the result of two VHS staff members who joined numerous educators from around the United States, Canada and other European countries in Finland, last March.

The project focuses on concepts of the design circle as well as breaking down barriers in education. With a focus on the development of 21st Century Skills, School Collaboration and School Partnerships. The project has the benefit of taking learning beyond the traditional look and feel. By allowing younger students to work side-by-side with older students, there is a natural mentor and leader partnership that begins to form. The limitless creativity of youth combined with measured practicality from the more mature student brings together an approach to a problem that allows all involved to see things in a new way.

While the project will take a couple hours each month for the first few months of the school year, we are hopeful to see an end result that is something in which the entire community can be proud. Finland's schools are renowned for their forward thinking, but practical approaches to education. We believe that being willing to examine problems differently will help provide our students with an advantage over their educational peers.

Stay tuned for more on the "TransformED" project - a Vermillion Schools partnership with St. Agnes Elementary and the community of Vermillion. We believe exciting things are yet to come!

Jon



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Volunteer Day to Take a Hiatus

by **Jon Frey** on August 27, 2023

A fixture for several years now during Homecoming week has been Volunteer Day. A day designed with the sole purpose of giving back to the community of Vermillion. There are so many great things to say about our students going out into the community to assist with everything from reading to elementary students to yard clean-up, but the time has come for us to make a



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few changes to the way in which we are able to do this event.

One consideration has to do with the possibility of moving this event to the spring. We are also looking at a few different ways to continue to try to provide the event while we make some changes to the administration of the event itself. So, while we cannot say for certain if it will become a spring event or remain in the fall, we do hope to incorporate some additional student activities with Volunteer Day to make it the best possible experience for our students and the community, as we can. For now, know that there will be no Volunteer Day activities for this fall and it remains to be seen whether it will return next spring, instead. There is a great deal of work on our end to do to be able to bring the activity back in a way that continues to work well for VHS and for the community of Vermillion. Stay tuned!

Picture Packets Are Available in the VHS Office

by **Jon Frey** on August 27, 2023

Students may stop by the Attendance Counter in the hallway outside the main high school office or stop in the principal's office to pick up a Picture Packet for school pictures to be taken **September 18th**, here at school. Pictures will be taken in the morning from approximately 8:30 to 11:00 am or so in the commons.

Students will be called down by grade level to have their picture taken. All students need to have their picture taken regardless of whether they plan to purchase a picture package or not as the photo is used on school ID's and the school's record keeping system.

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Teacher Feature!

This month, we feature Jasmin Heisinger, our *new* Alternative Education classroom teacher.

Jasmin Heisinger - Alternative Education Teacher



Where is home? My hometown is Canton, but I moved from Mitchell in May of 2022.

Where did you get your (post-HS) education? I went to Dakota Wesleyan University for my undergraduate degree and Southwest Minnesota State University for my graduate degree.

How many years have you been teaching at VHS? Overall? This is my first year at VHS, but I have been teaching for 8 years.

What classes do you teach? I am the alternative education teacher.

Did you always want to teach or did something lead to you teaching after first doing something else? I have wanted to be a teacher since I was in 4th grade! I always knew I would teach.

Do you coach any sports? Do you sponsor any activities or clubs? I do not coach any sports, but I am the freshman class advisor.

What is your favorite part of teaching at VHS? I love getting to know the students and helping students who need a little extra support get caught up in their credits.

Anything else? I love to travel! I have been to 10 different countries and many cities in the United States. I lived in Mexico for a short time, and I plan to travel to many other places in my future. I live with my husband, Tom, who teaches 3rd grade at Jolley. We were married in October 2022, so we have our 1 year anniversary coming up soon! We have two cats, Mia and Luna, who keep us entertained. Some of our favorite things to do are camping and spending time outdoors, traveling, spending time with our families and friends, and remodeling our house.

Welcome to VHS, Ms. Heisinger!



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Important Dates & Information for Fall Semester

- September 4th - **No School, Labor Day**
- September 13th - Celebrating Our Community Event (see below)
- September 15th - **No School, Teacher Inservice**
- September 25th-29th - **Homecoming Week**
- September 18th - **Picture Day**
- October 5th & 6th - **Fall Parent-Teacher Conferences**
- October 9th - **No School, Native American Day**
- October 17th - **End of Term 1**
- October 20th - **No School, Teacher Inservice**
- October 25th - **Picture Retake Day**
- November 3rd - **Early Dismissal at 1:30 PM** - PLT Day
- November 22 - 24th - **No School**, Thanksgiving Holiday Break
- December 19-20th - **FINAL EXAMS**
- December 21st - Jan. 3rd, 2024 - **No School** Christmas & New Year's Holiday Break

Celebrating Our Community!

by [Jan Stalling, VSD Native American Liaison](#) on August 30, 2023

On Wednesday, September 13th, Megan Red Shirt Shaw, Director of Native American Student Services, USD, Dr. John Little, Native Recruitment and Alumni Engagement Services, USD, and Jan Stalling, Native American Liaison for the Vermillion School District are co-hosting an event called "Celebrating our Community" - a Native American focused resource fair, FREE food courtesy of Heck's BBQ, and an evening of performances with Frank Waln and Kobe Jordan in Vermillion, South Dakota.

Location: Vermillion High School (Vermillion, SD)

Date: Wednesday, September 13th

Resource Fair: 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM

Program & Performances: 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM

Representing the Lakota Nation, Frank Waln is a multi-genre music artist, public speaker, and curator from the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota. He received a BA in Audio Arts

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& Acoustics from Columbia College Chicago where he was given the Mayor's Award for Civic Engagement at graduation.

Frank Waln uses his platform and work to speak out on injustices in the US and colonization of Native land and communities. His music is a fusion of multiple genres expressed through Lakota instruments, language and electronic music production creating a unique sound rooted in a culture that is older than America itself. Frank Waln's performance style is rooted in the Lakota tradition of storytelling which helped him carve out a unique space within Indian Country and the music industry at large.

Frank Waln has received several national awards, artist fellowships and residencies for his work including three Native American Music Awards, NDN Collective's Radical Imagination Fellowship and the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation Artist Fellowship. Frank Waln has performed and presented in museums and art institutions around the world including the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, the Linden Museum in Germany and the Kennedy Center. Frank Waln has appeared on radio and television for his work including MTV, ESPN, Al Jazeera, and NPR.

As a curator, Frank Waln designed a music interactive space in the new Native American Exhibition Hall at the Field Museum in Chicago. Frank Waln was recently commissioned by Harvard University's Committee on the Arts to curate a living memorial on campus to honor his great grandmother who was a survivor of Indian boarding schools. Frank Waln's music is available on all streaming platforms.

Kobe Jordan is a Native American singer/songwriter from Vermillion, SD, a graduate of Vermillion High School and is now based in Sioux Falls, SD. He is dedicated to creating music that sparks a familiar feeling, emotion, or memory. In a synthesis of styles fusing 80's tinged guitars with modern pop, Kobe presents tunes that elicit feelings of love and heartbreak, triumph, and tragedy. With stories in the form of songs, he wishes to share what he has learned with his listeners. After getting the opportunity to perform on the Levitt Stage last summer, he is ready to take the stage again to share the latest music that he finally feels is genuine pieces of himself.

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Activities News

The Benefits of School Activities Participation



Extracurricular activities continue to play an important role in student's lives. More than 10 million students nationwide participate in high school activities. As a result of these activities students learn life skills that would not otherwise be taught in the classroom. The National Federation of State High School Associations identifies several benefits to school activities.

Sportsmanship and citizenship are valuable behaviors learned in school activities. Students that are involved in activities are more likely to graduate, have a higher-grade point average, have better attendance, have fewer discipline problems, and more likely to demonstrate self-discipline. They develop both emotional and physical well-being. The community also benefits. Through community pride and spirit, rapport is established between adults and students along with overall camaraderie.

The goal of school activities in the Vermillion School District is considered part of the school's program of education. It provides experiences that will help promote health and well-being, academic success, character, and life skills. As we prepare students for our global community, we believe that these activities are an integral part of the student's educational experience.

Physical Forms & Activity Tickets

Vermillion Public Schools would also like to remind parents of yearly physical/consent forms required to participate in athletics. Each athlete must complete a physical before participation. Parents and students need to be aware of the Activities/Athletics handbook policy. Each student athlete will have the policy explained to them. Adult and Student activity tickets will be available at the high school, administration building, or at various sporting events. Cost for the activity tickets is \$50.00 for adults and \$25.00 for students. The Vermillion School District is offering a family activity pass for \$120.

If you have any questions, please call Vermillion High School. We look forward to a great 2023-2024 school year and GO, TANAGERS!!

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Student Services News

by [Luke Hayes](#) & [Laura Suing](#) on August 25, 2023

We are very excited to welcome students back for the next school year! We will continue to reach out via email as well as utilize the Minga app for school wide announcements, academic and career planning, and emotional and mental health strategies. We hope your summer is going well and again look forward to seeing each of you and helping you through the next school year!

Student Services Important Date Reminders

ACT Testing

Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline	Standby & Photo Upload Deadline
September 9, 2023	August 4, 2023	August 8, 2023	September 1, 2023
October 28, 2023	September 22, 2023	October 6, 2023	October 20, 2023
December 9, 2023	November 3, 2023	November 17, 2023	December 1, 2023
February 10, 2024	January 5, 2024	January 19, 2024	February 2, 2024
April 13, 2024	March 8, 2024	March 22, 2024	April 5, 2024
June 8, 2024	May 3, 2024	May 17, 2024	May 31, 2024
July 13, 2024	June 7, 2024	June 21, 2024	July 5, 2024



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FAFSA

What are the deadlines for filling out the FAFSA® form?

Federal Deadlines

2023-24 Academic Year

The FAFSA form must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. CT on June 30, 2024. Any corrections or updates must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. CT on Sept. 14, 2024.

College Deadlines

Each college may have its own deadline. Check with the college(s) you're interested in attending. You may also want to ask your college about its definition of an application deadline. Is it the date your FAFSA form is processed or the date the college receives your processed FAFSA data?

However, many states and colleges have earlier deadlines for applying for state and institutional financial aid. 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.¹

[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)

Vermillion High School

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

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