

Tanagers' Nest News

Just Like That ... Term 1 is in The Books!

With Homecoming in the rear view mirror, we find ourselves at the end of the first quarter of the 2023-24 school year!

by **Jon Frey** on Oct.. 9, 2023



Yes. We're all wondering, where does the time go? While it seems like a few days ago, we kicked off the 2023-24 school year, we will put the first quarter of the school year behind us on Tuesday!

We had a tremendous Homecoming week with lots of fun for the students and various competitions and events during the week that culminated with the parade and homecoming game on Friday. While the outcome of

the game did not play out the way we had hoped, the student body was full of spirit and seemed to really enjoy the week's events. Congratulations to seniors, Taeli Barta and Eli Meyer for being selected by their peers to preside as King and Queen of the Homecoming Week's Activities! Also a big "shout out" to the Student Council for planning the week's activities, the senior class sponsors, Ms. O'Connor and Mr. Schloss for ably handling the coronation affairs, as usual, Ms. Fisher and Mr. Hayes for providing their leadership to the Student Council and Ms. Billberg and Ms. Dibley for organizing the parade. Finally, but most importantly, a big "Thank you" to the student body for all their efforts as well as for their participation in the week's events.

As we move forward into Term 2, we look ahead to wrapping up fall sports and activities, making a strong push in academics toward successful course completion and credits earned and laying the foundation for what is to come in the second semester!

Jon

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Huska Selected SEAP Asst. Principal of the Year!

by **Jon Frey** on October 11, 2023

It gives me great pleasure to share with you the news that Jason Huska has been selected as the Assistant Principal of the Year for the Southeast Area Principals of South Dakota. The organization selects it's administrators of the year each fall to be named alongside those recognized from other regional administrative groups toward the eventual selections of South



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Dakota's representatives for Principal and Assistant Principal of the Year.

Mr. Huska is a homegrown administrator as a former VHS student, science teacher and current Assistant Principal and Activities Director. He brings a smile and even-keeled approach to all that he does in serving the students and staff of Vermillion High School. He is one of the most respected Activities Directors in the state and his recognition as a school administrator is long overdue.

Next time you see Jason, wish him congratulations on a job, "well done!" He doesn't seek awards and recognition, but deserves them, nonetheless.

VHS Hosts VCDC Career Exploration Event

by [Luke Hayes](#) on August 27, 2023

On October 11th Vermillion High School hosted, in partnership with the Vermillion Chamber of Commerce, a career fair that included over 20 local area businesses and organizations. The businesses represented ranged from health-care providers and financial, to engineering firms and agriculture businesses.



Hearing from many students after the event, many were able to connect with business representatives for job opportunities now and in the future. Even the VHS School Resource Officer, though not officially among the presenters, was asked many questions about how one becomes involved in law enforcement. Moving forward, we hope this partnership and event continues as an annual event in order to support area businesses and provide career opportunities for students.

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Guests included: HeartPrint Home Care, Yankton Medical Clinic, P.C., South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation, Job Corps, Masaba, Vermillion Fire & EMS Department, National Park Service, SESDAC, Inc., Kalins Indoor Comfort, USD Beacom School of Business, USD, Bank Midwest, Iowa Western Community College, USD Army ROTC, Midwest Ready Mix & Equipment, Inc., Applied Engineering, Marmen Energy, Coffee Cup Travel Plaza, and Nutrien Ag.

Teacher Feature!

This month, we feature Kaden Elder, our *new* Physical Education teacher and Strength Coach.

Kaden Elder - Physical Education Teacher



Where is home? I am originally from Windom, MN.

Where did you get your (post-HS) education? I attended the University of South Dakota

How many years have you been teaching at VHS? Overall? This is my second year in the district, but I student taught here as well so it feels a little longer than that!

What classes do you teach? I teach Physical Education, and Health at the Middle School. I also teach Strength and Conditioning at the High School.

Did you always want to teach or did something lead to you teaching after first doing something else? I began my college career with the idea of being a Physical Therapist or going to Medical School. After a semester of classes and countless job shadowing appointments, I found myself unfulfilled in those shadowing opportunities. Then I transitioned into education and never looked back.

Do you coach any sports? Do you sponsor any activities or clubs? I coach Middle School Football and Middle School Girls Basketball. I am also a Varsity Track assistant coach, and I coach our high school athletes in summer Strength and Conditioning.

What is your favorite part of teaching at VHS? I love the environment. My coworkers are fantastic and I really love teaching and coaching the students in our community.

Anything else? I am an avid shoe collector. My wife and I have 3 dogs. My wife is the owner of Jensen Kennels. I believe I am the only VSD employee to share a classroom with their mother in-law.

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Important Dates & Information for Fall Semester

- 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

Important Dates & Information for Spring Semester

- January 3rd - **No School, Teacher Inservice**
- January 4th - **First Day of Second Semester / Term 3**
- January 15th - **No School**, MLK Holiday
- February 7th - Midterm for T3
- February 15th & 16th - **Spring Parent-Teacher Conferences**
- February 19th - **No School**, President's Day Observance
- March 13th - **Early Dismissal at 1:30 PM** - PLT Day
- March 14th & 15th - **No School**, Spring Break
- March 18th - Term 4 Begins
- March 28th - **Early Dismissal at 1:30 PM** - PLT Day
- March 29th - April 1st - **No School**, Easter Break
- April 17th - Midterm for T4
- May 1st - Senior Awards Day Presentation - 2:00pm, VHS Auditorium
- May 11th - Graduation - 1:30pm, Sanford Coyote Sports Center at USD
- May 16th - Final Day of School - 1:30pm dismissal.

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Industrial Tech. Experience, “Build My Future”

by **Mark Neitzke**, VHS Industrial Technology Instructor, October 5, 2023



Recently, twelve students from our Welding, Small Engines and Building Trades classes attended [Build My Future](#) in Sioux City IA on Oct 3rd.

Dozens of industry trade businesses and municipal groups showed off aspects of their businesses and the opportunities that await

students within their fields with innovative and interacting games for high school students to take part in and interact with. This is the 2nd year Vermillion students have been invited to this event and just the fourth year the event has been held.

Activities News

Fall Activities Begin to Wrap Up

by **Jason Huska**, VHS Activities Director, October 11, 2023

The 2023 Fall activities are coming to a close. VHS had a successful fall campaign. The boys golf team returned home from Rapid City with its second State Championship in a row. The girls tennis team finished 5th at the State tennis tournament in Sioux Falls. Boys and girls cross country participated in the region 3A competition held in Canton. The Tanager boys finished in 3rd place and the girls came home as the region 3A champions. The girls soccer team was defeated in the quarter final round of the playoffs. The boys soccer team was eliminated by Tea in the semifinal round. Both boys and girls fought hard, coming up just a

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bit short. The Tanager volleyball team as well as the football team are winding down the regular season and preparing for tournament action.

VHS drama performed "The play that goes wrong" for this year's fall production. The outstanding performances were held on October 6, 7, and 8. The annual Apple Polishing Concert was held on Monday Oct 16h. Performances from the show choir, concert choir, and marching band will be enjoyed by all in attendance. The Fall Show will be held on November 17 and 18. Marching band has performed in several parades and competitions this fall. Closing out the marching band season will be the Quad State competition held October 21st at USD. Oral Interpretation and Debate are gearing up for several competitions beginning this fall.



It's been a terrific fall and we look forward to an exciting winter season! Go, Tanagers!



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!



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Student Services Important Date Reminders

ACT Testing

Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline	Standby & Photo Upload Deadline
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

FAFSA

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form is normally available in October of each year, but the 2024-25 FAFSA form will not be available until sometime in December 2023. They are working on making some major changes and improvements to simplify the process for students and parents when filling out the form. Changes to the FAFSA form for the 2024-25 aid year include expanded eligibility for federal student aid and a more streamlined application process. There is not a definitive launch date set yet, but when there is, the VHS Student Services office will communicate the date with senior students and parents.

If you would like to stay informed about FAFSA changes and receive up-to-date notifications and information, you can follow Federal Student Aid on social media for announcements and resources:

[Twitter/X](#) · [Instagram](#) · [Facebook](#) · [YouTube](#)



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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.