



School District of Altoona

RailroaderReview

Engage • Equip • Empower

"Offering large school opportunities with a small school approach."



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Dear Community Members:

In May 2021, we invited our community in so that we could gather feedback about their vision for the Altoona of the future. We used the feedback from our community to identify our focus of developing **Tomorrow Ready Citizens** who approach high school graduation as the starting line, not the finish line. We committed to putting our community's vision into reality in our schools. After all, the future of our community is in our schools today. To show how we have kept this promise to our community, this issue of **The Railroader Review**, once again, has our articles arranged according to the priorities identified by our community in May of 2021: **Academic Outcomes, Future Ready Outcomes, Personal Success Outcomes, and Operational Outcomes**. That community input event has continued to shape our decisions and focus.

As the community of Altoona grows, so does the school population. The results of a population study and a comprehensive facility study showed us that we need to address space and improvement needs in our schools. In November of 2022, we again sought input from our community. Our facilities are owned by our community members. We surveyed the community to understand if the

community supports addressing school facility needs and, if so, how much community members wish to invest in school facilities to meet these needs. This issue of The Railroader Review includes information about the April 2023 Referendum information sessions.

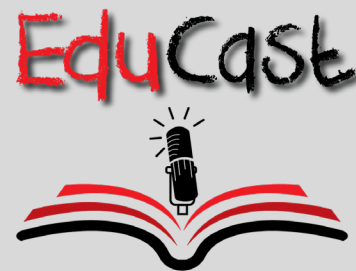
While the past several years in Altoona have brought unique challenges, our plans for our future and the progress we are making continues to leave us feeling hopeful. Thank you for your support as we keep our sights set on the promises of our future! The best is still to come.



My best,

Heidi Eliopoulos

Dr. Heidi Eliopoulos
Superintendent



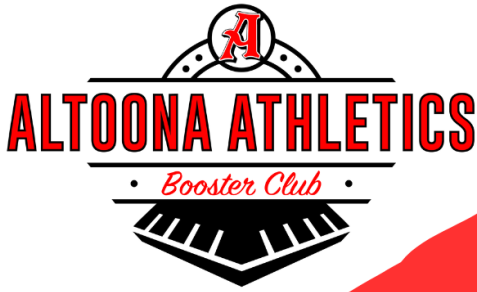
Steam-Powered by the School District of Altoona

The School District of Altoona has developed EduCast, a podcast by educators and for everyone. Each 25 minute podcast features a different aspect of education. Guests share information about education in general and refer to examples taking place right here in Altoona. The first episodes were about the ways in which schools are preparing students for their future careers and about the role of co-curricular activities in the student experience.

Check out EduCast on:

<https://www.echometownradio.com/altoonaschools>





**APRIL
1ST**

ALTOONA ATHLETICS
BOOSTER CLUB

FINAL 4 EVENT

Raising Funds for Altoona Athletics!



[HTTPS://DRIVE.GOOGLE.COM/FILE/D/1LQ8RUWCPLLA0ZJSV5GBWGX9X5ZWTJYMK/VIEW?USP=SHARE_LINK](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LQ8RUWCPLLA0ZJSV5GBWGX9X5ZWTJYMK/view?usp=share_link)

JOIN OUR TEAM

<https://www.altoona.k12.wi.us/district/employment>

The School District of Altoona posts vacancies to their District website and uses the Wisconsin Education Career Access Network (WECAN) website for accepting applications for job vacancies. All applications must be submitted electronically through WECAN. The School District of Altoona does not accept unsolicited applications. Please do not send application materials unless applying for an open position. Unsolicited application materials will not be processed.

Peggy McKillip
Human Resources, Payroll, and
Benefits Coordinator
pmckillip@altoona.k12.wi.us
715-839-6064 ext. 504



The School District of Altoona is an equal opportunity employer. Personnel hiring and administration in the District are to be conducted so as not to discriminate against applicant or employee on the basis of age, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation, disability/ handicap, citizenship status, marital status, pregnancy, national origin, creed, color, political or religious affiliation, genetic information, ancestry, arrest or conviction record, military service, genetic information, use or nonuse of a lawful product off school premises during nonworking hours, declining to attend a meeting or participate in any communication about religious or political matters, or any other reason prohibited by state or federal law. Exceptions to this policy may only be made in accordance with state and federal laws. Reasonable accommodations shall be made for qualified individuals with a disability or handicap, unless such accommodations would impose an undue hardship to the District. The District shall also accommodate the religious practices of an employee to the extent required by law. The District does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of sex in any education program or activity that the District operates. Title IX's requirement not to discriminate in any education program or activity extends to cover, but is not limited to, District students, certain admissions processes, and District employment. Inquiries regarding how Title IX and the federal Title IX regulations apply to the District may be referred to a District Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education, or to both. The District's commitment to nondiscrimination under Title IX and under other state and federal laws is further defined in the following policies of the School District: Policy 113, Policy 411, Policy 411.1, Policy 511, and Policy 512.

Board of Education

<https://www.altoona.k12.wi.us/district/school-board/index>



MEETINGS

Regular Meetings of the Board of Education are typically held on the third meeting of the month and begin at 6:30 pm, unless otherwise posted. Meetings are held in the District Office at 1903 Bartlett Avenue.

AGENDAS AND MINUTES

Board meeting agendas, packets, and minutes are posted on the Board of Education website. Paper copies of the agenda or minutes can be requested by calling the district office at 715-839-6032.

STUDENT BOARD REPRESENTATIVE

The School District Board of Education is currently accepting applications for the position of Student Board Representative. The Student Board Representative attends all regular monthly Board meetings and reports on the happenings at the high school. To apply, please complete and submit the application to Mrs. Buss no later than 3:30 pm on March 18th.

Application and Additional Information: <https://tinyurl.com/y24p6ed4>



Meet the Candidates

On Tuesday, April 4, 2023, the following offices are to be elected to succeed the present incumbents listed. The term of office for school board members is three years beginning on Monday, April 24, 2023. You may vote for up to two (2) candidates.

Office

School Board Member
School Board Member

Incumbent

Hillarie Roth
Nicole Breed



Nicole Breed

Question 1: Please provide a short biographical background.

My husband and I joined the Altoona community in 2018. Our son is excited to start 4K this fall and his sister will follow right behind him next year. I'm an instructor and librarian at Chippewa Valley Technical College. I also serve as a board member for Literacy Chippewa Valley and as the Chair for the Wisconsin Association of Academic Librarians.

Question 2: Why did you choose to run for the Board of Education?

I'm excited to run for reelection to the Board because of the impact I see on our schools and on our broader community. Serving on the Board can be hard work, but my background in education has been valuable to our decision making. Additionally, our work is met with great reward - a strong public education system makes Altoona better!

Question 3: What do you think the most important work of the Board will be over the next year?

Students are our first priority and always our most important work. I'm confident that the Board will continue to meet our students' needs through high expectations, regular monitoring, and innovative approaches to education. In addition, our community is growing and the Board will need to continue to address the challenges related to this which includes but is not limited to facilities needs.

It is the policy of the School District of Altoona that no person may be denied admission to any public school in this district or be denied participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be discriminated against in any curricular, extracurricular, pupil service, recreational, career and technical education or other program or activity because of the persons' race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, sex, including transgender status, change of sex or gender identity, or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability as required by s. 118.13, Wis. Stats.



Lauren Otto

Question 1: Please provide a short biographical background.

I have lived in Altoona since 2011 and have two children who attend Altoona schools; Grant who is in 6th grade at AMS, and Rowan who is in 3rd grade at AES. I am the owner and founder of Otto & Steiner Law, SC in Eau Claire, one of the premier family law firms in the Chippewa Valley. I have been involved in various organizations in Altoona and Eau Claire, including the Eau Claire Chamber of Commerce, Altoona Cub Scouts Pack 90, Scouts BSA Merit Badge Counselor, and the Altoona Lions Club.

Question 2: Why did you choose to run for the Board of Education?

I want to make sure that our district has a comprehensive facilities plan that addresses the speed at which our community is growing, yet remains flexible to accommodate changes.

I also want to make sure that our district is fully meeting the needs of our students of all abilities. For example, we currently do not have enough paraprofessionals to meet the needs of our students with behavioral IEPs, which causes disruption for all students in the classroom. In addition, AES does not have a functioning program for students identified as gifted and talented. I believe I have the experience necessary to help the district tackle these challenging issues.

Question 3: What do you think the most important work of the Board will be over the next year?

As of this writing, the current Board of Education is considering a referendum to be placed on the ballot this spring, along with the upcoming Board of Education elections. If this referendum is approved, the most important work of the Board will be to implement those results. If this referendum is not approved, the most important work of the Board will be to figure out next steps to meet the needs of our growing student population within the confines of our existing resources. I care deeply about our schools and have a vested interest in ensuring all students in Altoona, including my own, are receiving the best education possible. I look forward to serving them and all of you in the community as a member of the Board of Education.



Hillarie Roth

Question 1: Please provide a short biographical background.

Hello, my name is Hillarie Roth and I have been serving on the Altoona School Board for the last three years. In the 20+ years that I have lived in the Chippewa Valley it has been my absolute honor to serve my community in many capacities. From organizing blood drives, handing out water at marathons, working as a poll worker/Chief Inspector for the City of Altoona, and being a Police and Fire Commissioner for the City of Altoona, I serve. I enjoy the process of team building and working together towards common goals and feel that this is a tremendous asset as a board member. My family lives by the motto, "I can't change the world, but I can work really hard to make my corner of it a better place."

Question 2: Why did you choose to run for the Board of Education?

I am running for School Board because I am passionate about ensuring quality education for all students. Students are the future of our community and we need to ensure that they receive the best educational opportunities possible. As a former board member for the Wisconsin Association for Talented and Gifted I have advocated for educational services and funding at a state and national level. As a substitute teacher I have worked in classrooms grades kindergarten through 12, and with all levels of students abilities from special ed, mainstream, and advanced placement. I feel that these opportunities have given me an understanding of the unique challenges of education in today's world and that those insights are an attribute to the School Board.

Question 3: What do you think the most important work of the Board will be over the next year?

Throughout the next year, I think that the most important work of the board will be to continue to build community relationships with all stakeholders and ensure that the strategic plan, developed and implemented in 2021 by our current board, administration, and community members, for preparing tomorrow-ready citizens remains a focus. We have made great strides in the Altoona School District over the last three years even as we have navigated a pandemic and weathered administrative changes. We need to ensure that we stay on course and maintain this momentum.

Our Students Our Schools Our Future



School District of Altoona Referendum

VOTE APRIL 4

Referendum Information Sessions:

March 13th at 11:00 am at NBI, 1218 McCann Drive, Altoona

March 16th at 6:00 pm at Pedersen Commons, 1903 Bartlett Ave, Altoona WI 54720

Check out our website for complete information about the Referendum at <https://www.altoona.k12.wi.us/district/media/future-facility-planning>

What research and activities took place to inform the decision to go to referendum?

- What is the referendum asking?
- How would my taxes be impacted if the referendum passes?

Questions? Email referendum@altoona.k12.wi.us

ASKING
FOR HELP IS
OK



Navigating Mental Health Services in the Chippewa Valley

Getting access to mental health services can be challenging and confusing to do on your own. The "[Navigating Mental Health Services](#)" packet makes it easier to find help. The packet includes phone numbers for local services, commonly asked questions, and a mental health wellness check tool.

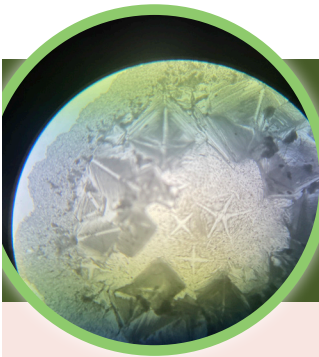


This information is provided by The Alliance for Substance Misuse Prevention coalition, which works to prevent alcohol, tobacco, and other drug misuse. For more information or to sign up for the Alliance's Parent/Guardian Newsletter, visit www.getinvolvedasap.org

IT'S SCIENCE!

Mr. Todd's 8th Grade Science class is taught that the Earth has a long and beautiful history, the story of which has been written in its rocks! In order to start learning the language of rocks, students conducted an investigation to answer the question "What determines the size of the mineral crystals found in rocks?" They examined several slides of mineral crystals under a microscope and analyzed their observations to determine the answer. Finally, they communicated their findings in a multi-page lab report, where they listed the variables being tested, stated a hypothesis in proper format, and supported a final claim with evidence and reasoning.

When students list all of the resources plants need in order to grow, they often include soil as one of the essential components. But in this long-term project completed by Mr. Todd's 8th Grade Science PIE class, students learned that soil actually isn't necessary at all! In a largely student-lead project, students planted seeds of their choice and provided them with all the necessary nutrients and conditions throughout their entire life cycles. They used a hydroponic Tower Garden system in order to raise their plants in a soil-free environment. The end result was a delicious and nutritious salad for our hungry learners!



4K Registration ♥ Now Open!

The **School District of Altoona 4K Program** focuses on play-based learning that prepares your child for Kindergarten and beyond, at no cost! As the only 4K connected to the district, the Altoona 4K Program is designed for all children who live within the school district who will be four years old by September 1, 2023. The program provides half day morning and afternoon session(s), Monday through Thursday from 8:10-11:30 A.M. and 12:15-3:35 P.M. Transportation is provided to and from ALL daycare centers in our district, as well as to and from in-home daycares, home - anywhere within Altoona city lines. For more information on how to enroll, go to:

<https://www.altoona.k12.wi.us/parents/registration>
<https://www.altoona.k12.wi.us/parents/open-enrollment>

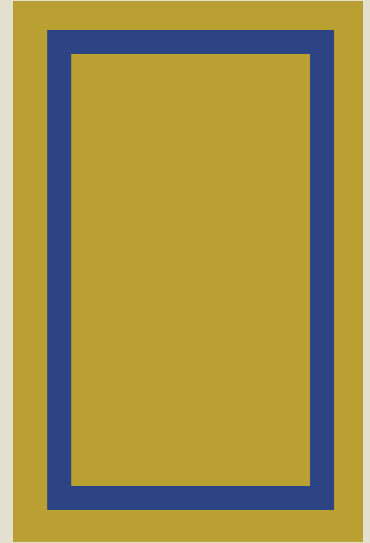


If you have any questions, or would like to schedule a tour of our 4K Early Education Center located at 754 Bartlett Avenue, Altoona, please contact Laura Trachsel, Altoona 4K Director, at: ltrachsel@altoona.k12.wi.us, or 715-838-7350.



Feet on Campus

Ten Altoona Intermediate School students were given the opportunity to engage in a 'Feet on Campus' visit to UW-Eau Claire in October of 2022. Students got to experience a tour of a college campus, ask questions to a panel of current college students, and eat a lunch buffet in the dining hall! We want our students to see themselves in as many 'Future Ready' lights as they possibly can - college being one of them. We will take another 'Feet on Campus' visit in February, and then a final one in May of 2023. If you'd like to schedule a visit to UW-Eau Claire for your child(ren), contact the Admissions office at 715-836-5415.



Employability Skills

The High School Business Department and Jess Richards, CTE Coordinator, have created an employability skills rubric. Students assessed themselves on their employability skills at the midterm and reflected on areas of strength and areas of growth. Students will reassess at the end of the trimester. This work has been implemented in all business classes in the High School to ensure all students have the skills needed to be successful post secondary.

Recently, groups of students have attended cluster tours at CVTC and the Education Department at UWEC and were able to hear firsthand what employers are looking for.





Altoona Voice in a National Conversation

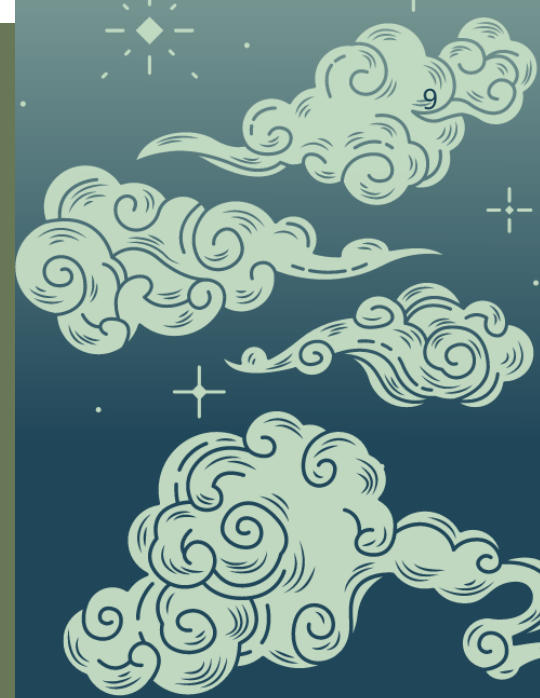
Sarah Radcliffe, Director of Future Ready Learning, has been elected to the Board of Directors for the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN). This is the national professional organization for educational technology leaders. CoSN has an influential voice in education. In her role as a board member, Ms. Radcliffe will provide input and direction on educational policies and practices related to areas like digital equity, innovation in learning, and cybersecurity.



Turn Your Pop Cans Into Scholarships!



The Altoona Area Foundation has a can collection bin in the high school parking lot. Monthly, the high school Student Council members empty the bin and turn the cans in for money. The Altoona Area Foundation uses these dollars to provide scholarships to graduating seniors. Please consider donating your empty cans to help send Altoona students to college or technical college!



MUSIC

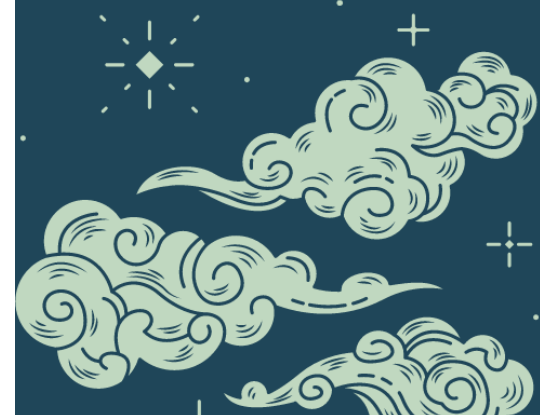
Concert & Event Dates

Monday, 03/13
MS/HS Band Spring Concert
7PM | HS Gym

Saturday, 04/01
Solo & Ensemble
Fall Creek HS

Monday, 05/08
MS Band/Choir Concert
7PM | HS Gym

Monday, 05/22
HS Band/Choir Concert
7PM | HS Gym



Personal Success
OUTCOMES

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING CORE PROGRAM REVIEW

In 2021, community members gathered to provide input on their vision for the future of the community of Altoona. A common theme was the need to prepare students to be tomorrow-ready citizens. In education, these “citizenship” skills are organized as Social Emotional Learning skills (SEL). As an exciting update, the School District of Altoona has started a Core Program Review of our Social Emotional Learning Skills. The goal of any Core Program Review is to continuously improve student learning and engagement in order to improve student achievement.

The outcomes of this work will be a scope and sequence of prioritized SEL standards, as well as an articulation of how the skills will be incorporated, taught, and practiced at the various grade levels.



Operational
OUTCOMES

HIRING FAIR



03.14.2023



Pederson Commons,
Altoona Middle School

Save the date, and spread the word! We are excited to host a districtwide hiring fair on March 14th from 4:30 p.m.-6:00 p.m. This event will be an opportunity to learn about job opportunities within the district for the 2023-2024 school year. Leaders will be available to discuss openings, answer questions, and share about the amazing work being done in each building and across operation areas. If you have an interest in joining our team, we hope to see you there!



MARCH 14th

2022-2023

ALTOONA ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES

<https://www.gorails.net>



Get Your Season Game Schedule Here!

<https://middleborderconference.org/public/genie/91/school/664/>



Fall Sports : All Conference Recognition

We'd like to recognize students who received accolades following the publication of our Fall Railroader Review.

Congratulations to the following students in receiving All Conference recognition during the 2022 Football season.

FIRST TEAM: Colin Boyarski (Running Back), **SECOND TEAM:** Ben Roth (Offensive Lineman), Colin Boyarski (Inside Linebacker), **HONORABLE MENTION:** Evan Steffen (Offensive Lineman), Hunter Hibbard (Running Back), Zavandre Cole (Wide Receiver), Ben Kuenkel (Punter), Tommy Tomesh (Inside Linebacker), Jackson Berg (Defensive Back), Zavandre Cole (Defensive Back), Hunter Hibbard (Defensive Back), Seth Hornby (Defensive Back), Evan Steffen (Defensive End).

WIAA/MBC Scholar-Athletes Announced

Congratulations to seniors Kennedy Tripler and Colin Boyarski, who will represent Altoona High School as the 2023 WIAA and Middle Border Conference Scholar Athlete. Kennedy and Colin will be attending the MBC Scholar Athlete Banquet on Wednesday, April 5th at St. Croix Central High School. If selected by the WIAA for statewide honors, scholar athletes will be recognized in ceremonies on Sunday, May 7th at the Hilton Garden Inn in Wausau.



Summer Student Employment Opportunities



During the summer months, we look for responsible high school students to help out. We hire custodial and IT helpers. These positions work during the week and offer flexible schedules for students.



Contact Information

School District of Altoona
1903 Bartlett Avenue
Altoona, WI 54720

715-839-6032 | 715-839-6066 Fax
<https://www.altoona.k12.wi.us/>

Superintendent

Dr. Heidi Eliopoulos
heliopoulos@altoona.k12.wi.us

Executive Assistant

Lisa Boss
lboss@altoona.k12.wi.us

Director of Finance and Operations

Gus Knitt
eknitt@altoona.k12.wi.us

Human Resources, Payroll, and Benefits Coordinator

Peggy McKillip
pmckillip@altoona.k12.wi.us

District Accountant/Accounts Payable Specialist

Elys Bohl
ebohl@altoona.k12.wi.us

Director of Student Services / Special Education

Missy Lesik, mlesik@altoona.k12.wi.us

Student Services Administrative Assistant

Kimberly Pearson, kpearson@altoona.k12.wi.us

Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Andrea Steffen, asteffen@altoona.k12.wi.us

Educational Technology, Career Planning & Workplace Learning

Sarah Radcliffe, sradcliffe@altoona.k12.wi.us

District Registrar & Open Enrollment Coordinator / Administrative Assistant - Future Ready Learning

Kari Holm, kholm@altoona.k12.wi.us

Virtual Learning

Lindsey Jentzsch, ljentzsch@altoona.k12.wi.us

Buildings, Grounds & Safety

Tim Chmelik, tchmelik@altoona.k12.wi.us

Food Service

Polly Dake-Jones, pdake@altoona.k12.wi.us

6-12 Athletics & Activities Director/Facilities Use Coordinator

Elissa Upward, eupward@altoona.k12.wi.us

Athletics & Activities Administrative Assistant

Kristi Springer, kspringer@altoona.k12.wi.us

Student Transit

Brandon Birkenholz, bbirkenholz@student-transit.com
715-839-5116

Altoona High School (9th – 12th Grades)

711 7th St W, Altoona WI 54720

Phone: 715-839-6031 | Fax: 715-839-6028

High School Principal

Becky Bauer, rbauer@altoona.k12.wi.us

High School Assistant Principal

Chad Hanson, chanson@altoona.k12.wi.us

High School Administrative Assistant

Melissa Buss, mbuss@altoona.k12.wi.us

High School Administrative Assistant

Tessa Ginder, tginder@altoona.k12.wi.us

Altoona Middle School (6th – 8th Grades)

1903 Bartlett Ave, Altoona WI 54720

Phone: 715-839-6030 | Fax: 715-839-6099

Middle School Principal

Steven Buss, sbuss@altoona.k12.wi.us

Middle/Intermediate School Dean of Students

Kyle Rundquist, krundquist@altoona.k12.wi.us

Middle School Administrative Assistant

Lori Watt, lwatt@altoona.k12.wi.us

Altoona Intermediate School (4th – 5th Grades)

1903 Bartlett Ave, Altoona WI 54720

Phone: 715-838-7111 | Fax: 715-839-6099

Intermediate Principal

Cale Zuiker, czuiker@altoona.k12.wi.us

Intermediate Administrative Assistant

Jess Bucki, jbucki@altoona.k12.wi.us

Altoona Elementary School (5K-3rd Grades)

157 Bartlett Ave, Altoona WI 54720

Phone: 715-839-6050 | Fax: 715-839-6166

Elementary School Principal

Leslie Lancette, llancette@altoona.k12.wi.us

Elementary School Assistant Principal

Ashley Minaker, aminaker@altoona.k12.wi.us

Administrative Assistant

Christina Moore

cmoore@altoona.k12.wi.us

Administrative Assistant

Shannon Ross

sross@altoona.k12.wi.us

Early Childhood Program / 4-Year Old Kindergarten

754 Bartlett Ave, Altoona WI 54720

Phone: 715-838-7350

4K Coordinator

Laura Trachsel, ltrachsel@altoona.k12.wi.us

Grace Lutheran Afterschool Care

Tyler Papierniak

tyler.papierniak@graceluthfound.com

Office 715-832-3003 ext. 20181





School District of Altoona
1903 Bartlett Ave.
Altoona WI 54720

Proud to be a Railroader!

Non-Profit Organization
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Eau Claire WI
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A NOTE TO *Visitors*

WE WANT OUR SCHOOLS TO BE OPEN AND WELCOMING PLACES FOR OUR FAMILIES, VOLUNTEERS, AND COMMUNITY. AT THE SAME TIME, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THEY ARE SAFE AND SECURE PLACES FOR OUR STUDENTS AND STAFF.

VISITORS TO OUR SCHOOLS WILL BE ASKED TO PLEASE DO THE FOLLOWING:

- CALL AHEAD TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE PERSON YOU ARE GOING TO VISIT.
- BRING AND PREPARE TO SHOW YOUR IDENTIFICATION UPON REQUEST.
- SIGN IN AND WEAR THE ASSIGNED VISITOR BADGE.
- REMAIN IN THE SPECIFIC AREA OF THE BUILDING WHERE YOUR MEETING OR VISIT IS SCHEDULED.
- SIGN OUT AND RETURN THE ASSIGNED VISITOR BADGE.

ECRWSS
POSTAL CUSTOMER



WHERE'S SPIKE?

OUR MASCOT SPIKE THE CONDUCTOR IS HIDDEN SIX TIMES IN THIS ISSUE. CAN YOU FIND ALL SIX?



www.altoona.k12.wi.us @AltoonaSD #ALTOONARAILS