ISSUE 02 **NOVEMBER 2021** 

School District of Altoona

# RailroaderReview





Engage • Equip • Empower

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

Strategic Plan pg. 3

pg. 4 "New Math"

pg. 7 SEL Survey: Panorama

pg. 8-9 Athletics & Activities

pg. 11 Board of Education



















### Superintendent's Note:

Dear community members,

We are excited to roll out the fall edition of the Railroader Review! It represents the start of a new chapter in our school district and community. Last May, 60 community stakeholders joined us in discussing their vision of the future of the community of Altoona along with what knowledge, skills, and experiences they believe students need to be ready to thrive and lead in the Altoona of tomorrow. We used their feedback to develop a strategic plan. The key strands of the plan are Academic Outcomes, Future Ready Outcomes, Personal Success Outcomes, and Operational Outcomes. These four strands are braided together to result in Tomorrow Ready Citizens. We are grateful for the opportunity to recommit to the future of our community and proud to share a plan that directly represents their input. To demonstrate our on-going commitment to ensuring our community's feedback comes to life in our schools, this and future newsletters will be organized by strand and will showcase the learning, programs, and opportunities in our schools.

We are confident that the tomorrows of Altoona will be better than our yesterdays. Thank you for your partnership and support as, together, we make that happen.

My best,

Heidi Eliopouloss

Dr. Heidi Eliopoulos Superintendent

### Our Community Leaders

On March 18, 2021, a group of community leaders representing various key stakeholder groups came together. Their task? To design and lead a community event that would help school district leaders understand the vision of Altoona 2040 and how students should be prepared to thrive and lead in their future community. The team organized invitations to the event and prepared to facilitate the activities planned for the event. Members of the Leadership Team Included:

Rick Risler (Elected official, Parent, Health Care), Wendy Heffernan (Real Estate), Sue Rowe (Health Care, Elected official), Reagan Conklin (Student), Colleen Chmelik (District Staff Member, Alumni, Parent), Tyler Tomesh (Business Community, Parent), Kristin Dexter (Community at Large), Marci Boyarski (Parent), Kristine Lenberg (District Staff Member, Parent), Ben Coenen (Alumni, Parent)

### The Community Event

On May 1, 2021, 60 members of the community of Altoona came together to provide their input. Through facilitated activities, they answered two key questions: What is the vision for Altoona 2040? What knowledge, skills, and experiences do our graduates need to thrive and lead in 2040? The top themes among the answers to these questions included: Multiple pathways to future success including career pathways, non-college options, and workplace learning, educational excellence for ALL students, problem solving & critical thinking skills, growth mindset, communication.







### From Community Vision to Action

The District used all of the themes from the event to form the development of a long range plan and vision of success. The result? Four key areas, or strands, on which the District can focus its efforts:

Academic Outcomes

Future Ready Outcomes

Personal Success Outcomes

Operational Outcomes

These four key areas braid together to result in Tomorrow Ready Citizens. Why tomorrow ready citizens instead of tomorrow ready students? Because graduation is the starting line, not the finish line for our students. The future of our community is in our schools today. These four strands became the foundation of the School District of Altoona 2021–2026 Strategic Plan.



# The Future of Our Community is In Our Schools Today!



### **TOMORROW-READY CITIZENS**

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ALTOONA

**ALL** means ALL.

2021-2026

### ACADEMIC OUTCOMES

Aspiration: All students will grow and develop as learners.

Working Definition: All students will achieve at high levels, making a minimum of one year's growth annually.

### FUTURE-READY OUTCOMES

Aspiration: All students will explore and pursue their post-graduation dreams.

Working Definition: All students will progress towards the next step of their post-graduation college and / or career plan.

### PERSONAL SUCCESS

Aspiration: All students will develop as caring, responsible, and aware individuals.

Working Definition: All students will develop nter-and intra-personal skills that will help them be successful in school, relationships, and life.

### OPERATIONAL OUTCOMES

Aspiration: District resources will be centered around outcomes for our students.

Working Definition:
Systems, processes,
and resources will be
maximized and aligned
to our prioritized
organizational
outcomes.



### AIS Learning Spotlight

On October 18th, members of our teaching staff, Lisa Roff, Serena Misch and Lisa Hanson introduced concepts in math during the School Board meeting. Fourth grade student Liam Prell helped explain Properties of numbers (factors, multiples, prime, composite numbers), while in 5th grade, Vivienne Olson and Caysen Glodowski explained and demonstrated the multiple strategies for solving multiplication; breaking the numbers apart, changing one factor and adjusting, creating an equivalent equation.







### "New Math", by Andrea Steffen, AIS Principal

What do I love about "new math?" There are many paths to get the right answer. The goal is the end, the solution. By teaching multiple strategies, not only do students have a better conceptual understanding of math, but all students have the opportunity to learn which pathway works best for them versus one size fits all. Gone are the endless problems on a worksheet. In its place are several problems that require deeper thinking, problem solving, collaboration and speaking to a partner/audience. When asked what they were learning in their current math unit, here is what Paxton Bryce and Xander Grambsch had to say. "In this unit we learned about the order of operations. The order of operations are: I. Perform operations within grouping symbols first ( ) and [ ]. 2. Multiply and divide in order from left to right. 3. Add and subtract in order from left to right. We're also working on solving multiplication problems using different strategies like breaking apart both numbers, using cluster problems, adjusting one factor, and breaking apart one number."

ANNUAL REPORT



2020-2021 School Year

Future-Ready

### 7th Grade Careers Class, By Steve Buss, AMS Principal

7th grade students are taking a class called Career Connections this year. In this class, they will be using an engaging online program called Xello. Xello is a career

exploration website that students will continue to use through 12th grade. It has over 500 different careers, 3500+ schools, and 1400+ majors that can be explored. In Xello, students will also take assessments and complete lessons to help them learn more about themselves, their interests, skills, learning styles, and more. This self-exploration will help them to narrow down what a good career fit might be. Throughout the semester, students will document their learning in an "About Me" presentation. They will be sharing this presentation with their families at their 8th grade high school planning conference.







## 4 Year Old Kindergarten

Since moving to our Altoona Early Education Center, our students have shown amazing growth during their 4K school year and are entering Kindergarten with a huge advantage in their development:

- 94% of our students entered Kindergarten at or above our expectations in knowing the beginning letter sounds of words.
- 87% of our students entered Kindergarten at or above our expectations in knowing their letters and letter sounds.
- 87% of our students entered Kindergarten at or above our expectations in knowing their numbers.

Our 4K program offers half day programming that runs Monday-Thursday, with transportation available! It's a program for children who turn 4 years of age on or before September 1st. Schedule a building tour today with Laura Trachsel, 4K Coordinator, 715-838-7350. 4K Registration for the 2022-2023 school year starts February 1, 2022 and ends May 31, 2022



### **ALTOONA'S SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH**

# (SBMH) SERVICES

Over the past five years, the School District of Altoona has sought to build strong connections with community-based mental health clinics to provide our students greater access to highly qualified mental health therapists. We have worked diligently to increase opportunities for our students, so that they can continue to develop strong social, emotional, and academic skills that equip and empower both in the present and the future. The collaborative work between the district and community-based mental health providers has resulted in a significant increase in the availability of mental health therapists within all four school buildings through private insurance. Having these therapists service students within our buildings has allowed for:

- more timely service delivery
- more effective access
- improved collaboration with the school systems
- a broader impact on our student population

We now have nine highly qualified therapists from seven clinics who serve students across all school settings. As the need for these types of mental health services grow in our community, we are very proud of our system, and the quality support it provides to about 7% of our student population. If you believe that your child may benefit from mental health services, please reach out to Stephanie Rohe (Grades K-5) via email at srohe@altoona.k12.wi.us or Jen Kronenberg (Grades 6-12) via email at jkronenberg@altoona.k12.wi.us.

# Vaping Quick Facts for Youth and Teens ...

x 🕴 Q

X & Q

# The Problem with Vaping: × • •

- 99% of vapes contain nicotine. Nicotine can harm overall brain development and is addictive.
- Using nicotine can also impact attention, learning, mood, and behavior in young people.
- Some additives in vapes can cause serious lung disease or cancer or can contain lead.
- A 2014 study showed that the use of flavoring made vapes more appealing for youth.

Source: CDC Quick Facts on the Risks of Ecigarettes for Kids, Teens, and Young Adults Source: CDC Quick Facts on the Risks of Ecigarettes for Kids, Teens, and Young Adults

### 10%

In 2019, students took the Youth Risk Behavior Survey.10% of Altoona Middle School students self-reported using vaping products in the last 30 days.

### 13%

In 2019, students took the

Youth Risk Behavior Survey. 13% of Altoona High School students self-reported using vaping products in the last 30 days.

### How to Talk to Teens about Vaping

To learn more about how to talk to teens about vaping, please visit:

x 🕴 Q



To get help quitting, visit: https://smokefree.gov or call 1-800-OUIT-NOW.

Source: https://ecigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/documents/SGR\_EC ig\_ParentTipSheet\_508.pdf

### New Social-Emotional Learning Student Survey: Panorama, by Alan McCutcheon

This fall, students in grades 3 through 12 were provided the opportunity to use a survey tool, Panorama, to give us insight into their learning experience, their sense of belonging in our schools, and their individual social-emotional needs. Hearing directly from the students helps us take intentional steps to improve students' learning and social experiences throughout our grade levels.

As we use this new survey information through Panorama, we look forward to linking student feedback with improving our social-emotional curriculum and services. Your child's emotional intelligence, or their ability to overcome difficulties, cope effectively with challenges, form positive and empathetic relationships with others, and develop a strong self-awareness, is of critical importance in helping them reach their current and future goals. We also plan to give students a summary of results, in order to gather suggestions on how we can improve their sense of belonging and supportive relationships.

We thank you for supporting your children in giving us this feedback, and look forward to future action steps based on your child's experiences in our schools.







Screening

FOR COVID-19 SYMPTOMS



Unvaccinated staff and students are required to screen for symptoms prior to coming to school. Unvaccinated students and staff should stay home if their screening reveals any following symptoms that cannot be explained by other causes (such as seasonal allergies). A temperature over 100.3 Fahrenheit within the last 48 hours, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, or sore throat within the last 48 hours, A new loss of taste or smell, muscle pain or chills, illness symptoms including vomiting, diarrhea, continuous nasal drainage, or rash in the last 48 hours. All students and staff (vaccinated or not) with a temperature over 100.3 Fahrenheit within the last 48 hours are required to stay home from school when they have a fever.

Additional COVID19-related information can be found on our district website: https://www.altoona.k12.wi.us/rails-return



# 2021-2022 ALTOONA ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES

https://gorails.net/

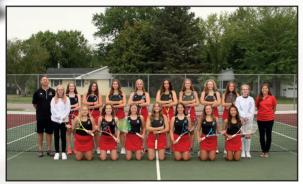


Don't miss a game - Get the rSchool App!

Google Play: https://tinyurl.com/25kx8n2a

Apple: https://tinyurl.com/2yxxkbnu

### Girls Tennis



2021 MIDDLE BORDER CONFERENCE CHAMPIONS

The Girls Tennis Team finished their season in WIAA Division II sectionals, earning 43 points and coming home with the sectional runner-up plaque.



GRETA SCHLAFER FOR COMPETING IN THE GIRLS STATE TENNIS TOURNAMENT.

Bella Bauer and Josie Rondestvedt won their first match and made it to the round of 16. Way to go Rails!

# Girls Golf

2021 CLOVER CROIX CONFERENCE CHAMPIONS

FIRST TEAM ALL CONFERENCE: ELLI ANDERSON, LYDIA JENSEN, KARALYN SKINNER, EMMA ANDERSON. SECOND TEAM ALL CONFERENCE: SYDNI YARRINGTON THE TEAM FINISHED THEIR SEASON IN THE SAINT CROIX CENTRAL SECTIONAL MEET AT PHEASANT HILLS GOLF COURSE IN HAMMOND, TAKING THIRD AS A TEAM.









Seasons for cross country, boys soccer, volleyball and football were still in progress during publication of our newsletter. Updates will be shared in our next newsletter!

Title IX Nondiscrimination Policy Statement-As mandated by the current provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and under the regulations set forth in Chapter 106 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations ("the federal Title IX regulations"), 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 (as designated below), to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education, or to both. The District scommitment to nondiscrimination under Title IX and under other state and federal llaws is further defined in the following policies of the School District: Policy 113, Policy 411, Policy 511, and Policy 512, District Title IX Coordinators – The District employees who hold each of the positions identified below serve as Title IX Coordinators for the District: Alan McCutcheon (Director of Pupil Services and Special Education) 715-839-6030, ext. 311 | amccutcheon@altoona.k12.wi.us Sharon Chwala (Payroll and Benefits Specialist) 715-839-6064, ext. 504 | schwala@altoona.k12.wi.us 1903 Bartlett Avenue, Altoona, WI 54720.

Operational OUTCOMES

### 2021-2022 Continues Positive Trends for Altoona,

by Michael Markgren, SDA Business Manager

For the sixth year in a row, there is great news for the School District of Altoona residents. The Mill Rate, which is the levy rate per \$1,000 of property, will again be decreasing. This year it will drop from \$9.52 down to \$8.33. The Mill Rate is again below what it was the year before the construction referendum passed. A home valued at \$150,000 will pay, on average, \$178.50 less in school property taxes. This will vary depending on your property's Fair Market Value versus what it was last year. The City of Altoona has done a wonderful job of carefully planning residential expansion and local developers have made it happen.

Further good news comes in the growth of our student population. The Third Friday in September Head Count increased another 69 students from last year and well over 200 from just three years ago. Head count is the total number of students that we educate. It includes Altoona's Membership, students who reside within the District boundaries and attend Altoona; plus Open Enrolled In students; less Open Enrolled Out students.

### New Co-Curricular Opportunity at Altoona High School Brings the Court System to Life for Students



Using facts and case materials developed by Wisconsin attorneys, students at Altoona will gain a deeper understanding of the court system as they develop their arguments and build their cases.

"I am excited to provide students an opportunity to work with judges and attorneys in our community and gain hands-on experience with public speaking, critical thinking, and forming a persuasive argument."

Erin Lynnes, Mock Trial Advisor



# JOIN OUR TEMM!

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.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**

Sharon Chwala Human Resources, Payroll, and Benefits 1903 Bartlett Ave. Altoona, WI 54720 715-839-6064 schwala@altoona.k12.wi.us



# SAVE THE DATES

**SUMMER SCHOOL 2022** 

Session I: June 13 - June 30
Session II: July 6 - July 21
Summer School Meets Mondays - Thursdays.
No summer school June 23rd





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, Policy 511, and Policy 512.

# **Board of Education**



MEETINGS, AGENDAS, MINUTES - Regular Meetings of the Board of Education are typically held on the third Monday of the month and begin at 6:30 pm, unless otherwise posted. Meetings are held in the District Office at 1903 Bartlett Avenue. Board meeting agendas, packets, and minutes are posted on the Board of Education website. Paper copies of the agenda or minutes may be requested by calling the district office at 715-839-6032.



Rick Risler President rrisler@altoona.k12.wi.us



Dan Gluch, Vice President dgluch@altoona.k12.wi.us



Dave Rowe Treasurer drowe@altoona.k12.wi.us



Hillarie Roth, Clerk hroth@altoona.k12.wi.us



Jeremy Zook, Member izook@altoona.k12.wi.us



The Altoona Middle School was the first School Board member's Learning Visit. During their visit, Mr. Buss provided information regarding programming and opportunities available to our students. Pictured here are members of our Administrative Team and Board of Education.

GOVERNANCE - Governance for Excellence is a results-oriented framework used by the board to ensure a system focus on our school district's vision and results policies. Both our school district's vision and our results policies are based on au-

thentic community feedback. Through our Community Conversations, we have opened clear lines of communication with community stakeholders, and we have embraced community feedback and embedded it into our operational expectations and results policies. For more information regarding members, Governing Policies for Educational Excellence, agendas and information (Boarddocs), definition of meeting types, and annual notices visit the Board of Education page on the school website.

ADDRESSING THE BOARD - Persons interested in providing comments to the Board may register to provide written comment to the Board; and or register to address the Board as a speaker. The Registration Period will begin no earlier than 20 minutes prior to the time that the meeting is scheduled to convene. Paper copies of the registration forms are available at the meeting or may be downloaded from the School Board Public Participation at Board Meetings website. Completed forms must be given to School Board secretary prior to the beginning of the meeting.

### INFORMATIONAL MEETING

for Any Citizen Interested in Running for the Board of Education

November 4, 2021 6:00 pm **District Office** 

At this meeting learn about

- The roles and responsibilities of being a Board member
  The governance model of the Board
  The time commitment of Board membership

- The process for being nominated to be on the ballot



**ELECTION DAY IS APRIL 5, 2022.** 



# Contact Information

### Superintendent

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

### **Board of Education**

Lisa Boss lboss@altoona.k12.wi.us

### **Finance & Operations**

Michael Markgren mmarkgren@altoona.k12.wi.us

## Human Resources & Employee Benefits

Sharon Chwala schwala@altoona.k12.wi.us

# District Bookkeeper\Accounts Payable Specialist

Elys Bohl ebohl@altoona.k12.wi.us

#### **Student Services**

Alan McCutcheon amccutcheon@altoona.k12.wi.us 715-839-6224 ext 354

### **Curriculum & Instruction**

Andrea Steffen asteffen@altoona.k12.wi.us

# **Educational Technology, Career Planning & Workplace Learning**

Sarah Radcliffe sradcliffe@altoona.k12.wi.us

### Virtual Learning

Terri Hanson thanson@altoona.k12.wi.us

### **Registration & Open Enrollment**

Kari Holm kholm@altoona.k12.wi.us 715-838-7345

### **Buildings, Grounds & Safety**

Tim Chmelik tchmelik@altoona.k12.wi.us 715-839-6030 ext. 339

#### **Food Service**

Polly Dake-Jones pdakejones@altoona.k12.wi.us 715-839-6056

# Athletics & Activities and Facilities Use

Elissa Upward eupward@altoona.k12.wi.us 715-839-6031 ext. 416

Kristi Springer kspringer@altoona.k12.wi.us

### Altoona High School

(9th – 12th Grades) 711 7th St W, Altoona WI 54720 Phone: 715-839-6031 Fax: 715-839-6028

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

Chad Hanson, Assistant Principal chhanson@altoona.k12.wi.us

Michelle Mitch ext. 400 Administrative Assistant mmitch@altoona.k12.wi.us

Brenda Gilmartin ext. 401 Administrative Assistant bgilmartin@altoona.k12.wi.us

### **Altoona Middle School**

(6th – 8th Grades) 1903 Bartlett Ave, Altoona WI 54720 Phone: 715-839-6030 Fax: 715-839-6099

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

Chad Hanson, Assistant Principal chhanson@altoona.k12.wi.us

Lori Watt ext. 300 Administrative Assistant 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

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

Jess Bucki ext. 301 Administrative Assistant 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

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

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

Rachel Schumacher Administrative Assistant rschumacher@altoona.k12.wi.us ext. 200

Shannon Ross Administrative Assistant sross@altoona.k12.wi.us ext. 201

### 4-Year Old Kindergarten

754 Bartlett Ave, Altoona WI 54720 Phone: 715-523-0817

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

### **Early Childhood Program**

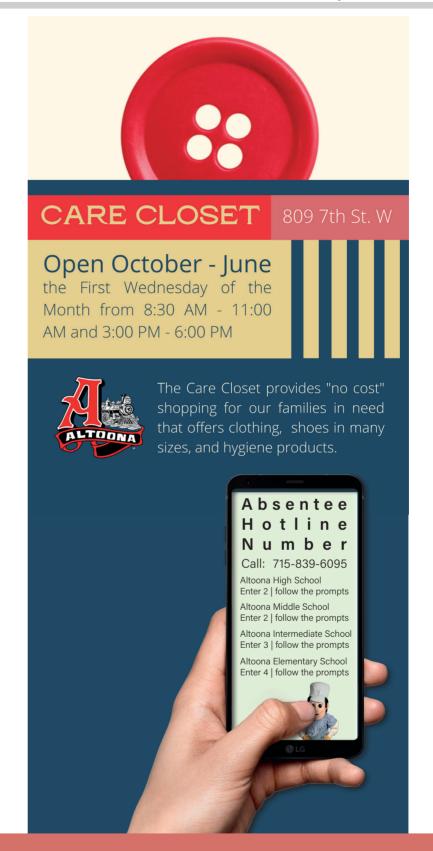
754 Bartlett Ave, Altoona WI 54720 Phone: 715-838-7350

### **Student Transit**

Brandon Birkenholz bbirkenholz@student-transit.com 715-839-5116 3339 Fehr Rd, Eau Claire WI 54701

### **Grace Lutheran Afterschool Care**

Nancy Fliehr nancy.fliehr@graceluthfound.com Office 715-832-3003 ext 166



School District of Altoona 1903 Bartlett Avenue Altoona, WI 54720 715-839-6032 | 715-839-6066 Fax https://www.altoona.k12.wi.us/



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** Your identification AND BE PREPARED TO SHOW IT IF REQUESTED.

**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.

School District of Altoona 1903 Bartlett Ave. Altoona WI 54720

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**ECRWSS POSTAL CUSTOMER** 

# WHERE'S

Our Mascot Spike the Conductor can be found throughout this issue of the Railroader Review. Can you find them all?











#ALTOONARAILS