

Cougar Connection

September 2020

Welcome to the "Cougar Connection". This publication is printed & distributed monthly.

South Heart Public School's Mission Statement: OUR MISSION IS TO PREPARE EACH STUDENT FOR THE FUTURE AND FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

Calvin Dean
Superintendent

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Elementary Principal

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High School Principal

Ronnie Stewart
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Dana Urban
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Rhonda Steckler
Head Custodian

A Note from the Superintendent

Mr. Calvin Dean

Welcome Back!!:

Simply put, the 1st day of school on August 19, 2020, was the most enjoyable day of work I've had in a very long time, probably since March 13 (the last time we held school in the building last spring). Having students and staff together again was incredible!

Early on August 19, Superintendent Rick Diegel from Kidder County sent out an email statewide. That email stated *"Everyone. I just wanted to wish everyone a GREAT school year! Today is our first day, and I can't describe the joy of watching all of our kids come back into our buildings for the first time since March 13th. This is my 34th year in education, and 25th year in administration, and I don't think I have ever been as excited for a first day as I was today. Thanks, and have a great day. Rick Diegel, Kidder County"*

Shortly afterwards, I also sent out an email statewide. My email stated *"Hi everyone! Today is our 1st day of school also. I agree, seeing the students today helped me realize that all the hard work we've done over the past 5 months is worth it. The students will lift your hearts! Have a great year! Calvin Dean, South Heart"*

As we begin the 2020-21 school year, I need to express my sincere thanks to the school board, staff, students, parents, and the entire community (South Heart School Family) for working together and making a return to school possible.

Developing our South Heart School Health and Safety Smart Restart Plan is one of the most difficult tasks I've ever done in my 28+ years in education. Never have I dealt with an issue (along with many other current issues) that has such wide-
(Continued on next page)

Important Dates:

September 3: Picture Day

September 7: No School-Labor Day

September 8: Fifth Grade Parent Meeting (Changing Program) 7:00pm

September 17: Sixth Grade Parent Meeting (Changing Program) 7:00pm

September 24: Parent Teacher Conferences 3:45pm-6:45pm

September 28: Elementary Boys' Basketball Begins

SOUTH HEART SCHOOL

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and passionate variance in stakeholder opinion and the potential for numerous bad feelings amongst stakeholders. Our return-to-school committee spent countless hours putting together our plan and I am very proud and grateful for the extensive, thorough work we did. But in the end, I've come to realize that there is no plan that exists that will satisfy everyone's desires and opinions. Our hope is that we have implemented a Health and Safety Smart Restart Plan that reflects the desires of the majority of parents, students, and staff and also reflects a common sense approach to returning to the school in such a way that school can be held as "normal" as possible and yet provides health and safety protocols that are reasonable. Furthermore, we hope we have also offered viable, quality options for those families that are not yet ready to return to school in the building as we also respect those decisions. Although this process has been a challenge, I am proud of our South Heart School Family. As I told our staff, "If COVID-19 is something that for some unknown reason we as a school must have to overcome, there is no other school but South Heart School where I would rather take on that challenge."

Informational Video – COVID-19 in Schools

The North Dakota School Nurses Association and the North Dakota Department of Health have put together an excellent YouTube video that answers many questions regarding COVID-19 and the impact on school and school activities. I would strongly encourage everyone to watch this video as it clearly explains the contact tracing process and communication that health care providers and local health units will do when a student or staff member has a positive COVID-19 test and/or been asked to quarantine.

Notice Of Policy On Opting Out Of Assessments

School Board Policy GCE-E

The South Heart School Board has adopted a policy on opting out of state and federal assessments, which is based on requirements in law. The policy can be viewed online by visiting <http://www.southheart.k12.nd.us/files/2018/03/GCE-Opting-out-of-State-and-Federal-Assessments.pdf> and the necessary form that must be completed to opt out of state and federal assessments can be found at <http://www.southheart.k12.nd.us/files/2017/08/Student-Assessment-Opt-Out-Form.pdf>

Directory Information

School Board Policy FGA

The District may disclose directory information without parental/eligible student consent if it has given parents/eligible students a reasonable amount of time to opt-out of directory information release.

The Board approves release of directory information as follows:

- a. Publication on the district's website
- b. To board-approved vendors for purposes of sale of school-related items such as, but not limited to, yearbooks, school pictures, graduation items, district apparel, and book orders
- c. To military and college recruiters in accordance with applicable laws (NDCC 15.1-07-25.1 and 20 U.S.C. 7908)
- d. To official district newspaper for purposes of recognizing student accomplishments and coverage of extracurricular events
- e. To school-affiliated groups for purposes of communicating and fundraising
- f. To school-sponsored student publications including, but not limited to, newspapers and yearbooks
- g. When the Board receives and approves a directory information release request; directory information shall only be released and used for purposes specified in the release request and the Superintendent shall add approved requestors to the district's master list of individuals and entities having access to student information. The Board shall develop criteria in regulations for approving and denying these requests.

If you do NOT want directory information released to outside agencies for the 2020-21 school year, please complete and return School Board Policy FGA-E (located on the school website at <http://www.southheart.k12.nd.us/files/2018/03/FGA-E-Notice-of-Directory-Information.pdf>) and return to the school office asap.

Parent Pick-Off & Drop Off Location:

1. EAST SIDE OF SCHOOL: Student drop off – pick up for parents that transport students to and from school each day is located in the parking lot on the east side of the school. Please progress through the parking lot in a counterclockwise position when dropping off or picking up students.

2. WEST SIDE OF SCHOOL: The west side of the school is reserved for route buses only and staff parking. The west side of the school on 4th Street West is reserved for bus parking only from 7:45- 8:30 am and 2:45 – 3:30 pm. Parents: Please do not park in this area during these times.

Note: The above changes were made to improve the safety of our students, especially at the end of the school day. Staff supervision will be provided on both sides of the school at the end of the day.

Weather Cancellation Notices

In the event that school has to be cancelled, start late, or end early, South Heart School will provide notices using the following methods.

1. SwiftReach SwiftK12 – This is our automated calling system that will use data in Powerschool to call, text, and email parents and staff. If you do not receive a message via all 3 of these methods, please call Dana at the school and she will update the information.

2. KBMY television

3. KQCD television

4. KXMA television

**THANK YOU AND WE WISH EVERYONE A HEALTHY AND SAFE 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR!
GO COUGARS!**

2020-21 Attendance:

As we begin the 2020-21 school year, it is important to clarify attendance expectations during this unique time.

Classification of Students

Students are classified as **Traditional** (On-Site Face to Face) or **Distance Learning**. Students cannot be both and cannot “bounce” back and forth. However, it is possible to change from one classification to the other when a decision is made by parents that is considered long-term as determined by the school administration. The only exception that allows a more short-term change in classification is when a student is isolated/quarantined by the health department or a health care provider (typically 10-14 days).

Traditional Students – Attendance

Traditional students attend school on-site Monday – Thursday; normal attendance procedures shall apply

If a **Traditional** student stays home for any reason Monday - Thursday, that student **shall** be marked absent, even if the student “attends” class virtually. This policy is to prevent students from “bouncing” back and forth in classification.

EXCEPTION: If a student stays home for a couple days while waiting for COVID-19 test results either personally or in the household, those students will not be marked absent if they attend virtually. Documentation from a doctor may be required to verify

Traditional students that are isolated/quarantined by the health department or a health care provider will be reclassified as a Distance Student during that time and will follow Distance Education attendance policy

Distance Education Fridays ARE school days, but direct instruction is **not** provided to **Traditional** students on these days as **Distance Education Fridays** are exclusively dedicated to **Distance Learning** students. As such, attendance for **Traditional** Students will not be taken on these days, but **Traditional** Students are expected to complete homework and other classwork independently.

Distance Education Students – Attendance

Distance Education students are expected to “attend” school virtually Monday – Thursday same as **Traditional Students** when live, online instruction is offered by school staff; therefore, normal attendance procedures shall apply. This is also applicable to students that are isolated/quarantined by the health department or a health care provider.

Distance Education Fridays are days dedicated entirely to **Distance Education** students. As a school, we understand and respect the decisions of parents who do not want their child(ren) to attend school on-site in the building with others. However, providing quality instruction to students via **Distance Education** is extremely challenging for school staff and we ultimately want those **Distance Education** students to also succeed. Therefore, when required by school staff, **Distance Education** students are expected to meet virtually with school staff; when required, normal attendance procedures shall apply. Although not required, **Distance Education** students are encouraged to meet with school staff face-to-face at school on **Distance Education Fridays** as less people will be present. Please also note that **Distance Education** students will be required to be on-site during various **Distance Education Fridays** for federal-state mandated assessments as these tests cannot be administered virtually. Parents that are not comfortable with being on-site for federal-state mandated assessments can opt out of these tests by completing an Opt-Out form accessible in the lower right corner of the South Heart School website.

North Dakota Center for Distance Education classes (NDCDE)

NDCDE classes are **NOT** taught by South Heart School staff, but rather online through staff employed by NDCDE. Students and parents are required to sign a contract with South Heart School before enrolling in these courses.

Traditional students enrolled in NDCDE classes shall not be permitted to leave school during these times and will be assigned to a room at school where normal attendance procedures shall apply

Distance Education students enrolled in NDCDE classes will not be assigned to school staff while participating in these classes; attendance will NOT be taken

“Learners for Life”

Welcome Back! We are incredibly excited to have students back in the building at SHHS! I even get the feeling that the students were excited to be back in the building, for the first time since last March. This school year will present us with new concepts of teaching and learning. We like to refer to these as hurdles, not challenges. We will “jump” over each hurdle that is placed in our path and continue to provide our students with the highest quality of education. There have been a lot of changes to our routines at school. Each day we are working with new ideas and concepts to develop a consistent routine for our students. Please continue to work together with the school to help ensure that we are meeting all of your needs during this time.

Please welcome our new high school staff members: Mrs. Lindsey Delvo is our new science teacher at South Heart High School. Mrs. Delvo is originally from Ramsey, MN. She attended and graduated from Anoka High School. Northern State University in Aberdeen, SD, was her choice of college where she graduated in 2020. Mrs. Delvo is enthusiastic, energetic, and has a desire to see students succeed. She is a great addition to the staff at SHHS!

Mrs. Pamela Dean is our new special education teacher for grades 7-9. Mrs. Dean graduated from Glendive High School and attended Montana State University-Billings. She has been a classroom teacher for seven years, a special education teacher for fifteen years, and a day treatment educator for twelve years. Mrs. Dean brings a wealth of knowledge and a passion for working with special needs. We are very fortunate and excited to bring a teacher of Mrs. Dean’s caliber to our staff!

We look forward to having a great year!

Staying Connected with South Heart High School and Heart River Athletics:

District Website: <http://www.southheart.k12.nd.us>

Activity Calendar: http://www.badlandsconference.org/g5-bin/client.cgi?G5genie=435&school_id=13

Facebook: www.facebook.com (Search HR Cougars)

Twitter: @heartrivercgrs

Sincerely,
Mr. Jung
High School Principal

The Principal Files: Mrs. Geis

Welcome back to school for the 2020 school year. I am so excited to be back in the school building and interacting with the students daily. I missed hearing people in the school building over the past six months, and I look forward to the school year.

Looking ahead, the elementary students will be completing Istation, and ACT Aspire assessments starting August 31, 2020. These assessments help us to understand where students are at in their abilities and also allow us to provide Title 1 and intervention services.

This month will be the Changing Program—nursing students from Dickinson State University in a partnership with West Dakota Parent and & Family Resource Center—in the fifth and sixth-grade classrooms.

Information will be sent home to parents about the program.

Reminders:

September 8, at 7:00 pm Fifth Grade Parent Meeting

September 10, Fifth, and Sixth Grade Changing Program in the classroom

September 17, at 7:00 pm Sixth Grade Parent Meeting

Counselor's Corner: Mrs. Olson

Greetings from the South Heart School Counselor's Office. I am Mrs. Olson, the school counselor. My job is to help students grow in their academic, personal, social, and emotional skills. I will meet weekly with elementary classes and monthly with grades 7-12. During this time, I will update students on any information pertinent to their grade level and conduct lessons focused on development.

For students in high school, I will post scholarship information directly to my webpage which can be found on the South Heart School website at www.southheartk12.nd.us. Go to the High School link, then High School Staff and click on my name Bobbie Olson to access my webpage. Explore my webpage for other information that you may find useful as you or your student prepares for the future.

I will also list upcoming events in the Cougar Connection monthly, so for testing dates and deadlines be sure to read this section for updates.

Upcoming Events:

Juniors and Seniors:

- Virtual College Fair September 15 8:00am –2:00pm
- College Tour – I am working with colleges to make this happen. It may look different than we have in the past due to COVID-19 but stay tuned for updates.

Seniors:

- Registration for the **October 24** ACT test deadline – **September 17** – to register go to ACT.ORG
- College Application Day will be held during counseling time in October. Students who register with Mrs. Olson will have their registration fees for North Dakota colleges and Universities waived. Representatives from the ND University System will be available to help with the registration process.

Juniors:

- PreACT Test - September 9 - This is the test that was scheduled to take place in the spring, but due to the pandemic had to be rescheduled. This test will help you determine what areas you need to work on prior to the ACT test in March.

Sports Information from Mr. Stewart

Reminder to all student athletes. If you got a physical during the 2019-20 school year, you do NOT need a physical again this year. You do however need to complete the NDHSAA sports questionnaire (form B). This document is located on our website. If you did not get a physical last year, then you must get a physical this year before you can practice with the team.

Start date for Elementary Boys Basketball is 9/28. Parents please sign up to get updates from your child's coaches on the REMIND app. This is a great communication piece to inform you of any changes in the schedule. Sport Specific Codes are on the main page of the South Heart School website. All sports schedules for games and practices are on the school calendar. South Heart and Belfield schools purchased new cameras that will be broadcasting games and concerts in SHHS and BHS gymnasiums. To watch these games online, you can go to www.nfhsnetwork.com for details.

Attendance for home and away games for Cougar Athletics:

If Heart River is playing at an away contest, all Junior High and High School teams will receive passes from the coaching staff to hand out to parents and fans. Each player will receive TWO passes to hand out to any two people they choose to attend the away contest. You MUST have the pass in order to be admitted to a game at any venue other than South Heart or Belfield. These passes will be handed out before each game by your child's coach. You will be able to watch all games at that venue with a pass. Example, if your daughter plays on the C or JV squad, you are able to watch C, JV, and Varsity games that night. Please do not lose the pass. Let Mr. Stewart know if you need a replacement pass.

Attendance for HOME games at BHS and SHHS games: Heart River Co-op will NOT require passes for home fans in attendance. We will only require passes for our visiting teams in attendance as this guideline was set by area Athletic Directors. Please note that things are changing quickly, and restrictions may be set by the state on occupancy and such so this could change. Please remember to practice social distancing guidelines while in attendance.

Yearbook

The 2020 yearbooks have been distributed to students who pre-ordered and are attending school. Students who are distance learning and Class of 2020 students are asked to call the office to make arrangements to pick up their book. Extra books are available for \$35 in the library or by calling the office to make purchase arrangements.

CPASS

CPASS is looking for parent help with concessions. Without parents helping we will not be able to have concessions open for games. Please join our Facebook group at South Heart C-PASS and text 810-10 @southheart to join the Remind group.