

Watertown Mayer High School

Royal Roundup

Congratulations Class of 2020



Honoring the Class of 2020

By Superintendent, Ron Wilke

Together in Spirit was a common theme among the student speeches from the Watertown-Mayer Class of 2020 graduation recognition. The 2019-2020 school year will hold a place in history like no other, and the same will be the case for our Class of 2020. While the COVID-19 pandemic required substantial change to the district's traditional commencement recognition, without question, the dignity, class and pride on the part of our Class of 2020 was as strong or stronger than in any year past. Perhaps no one captured that spirit better, than student speaker, Rachel Watne, when she said "Even though we are graduating apart, we are together in our hearts."

Congratulations to the Class of 2020. The resilience and perseverance you have demonstrated throughout the final weeks of school will serve you well in whatever lies ahead. Our schools and communities are so proud of ALL that you have accomplished and the wonderful young adults you've grown to be. And, as I have said to those that have come before you, you are now part of a very distinguished group of people known as Watertown-Mayer Alumni. Go Royals!

Please enjoy the photos on the next page of the Roundup from what proved to be a very special evening honoring the Class of 2020. 🏰



With Thanks & Gratitude Superintendent Wilke to Retire

Dear Watertown-Mayer School District Families and Residents,

After 39 years in education the time has come for me to step down from my role as superintendent and move on to the next stage of life in support of my family. While this move is a bit earlier than I had originally planned, concern for my health is significantly impacting my ability to provide the presence and level of leadership Watertown-Mayer Schools deserves and needs. I have submitted my letter of resignation to the school board, effective July 31, 2020.

My years in education, as teacher, principal and superintendent, are filled with many wonderful memories of supporting students and the communities in which I have served. At the very top of that list are my past five years in Watertown-Mayer. It has been a tremendous honor to be a part of such a wonderfully caring school district. My wife Karen and I have thoroughly enjoyed every minute of our time in Watertown and Mayer. From day one of my time in the district, I experienced a tremendous level of pride in and outpouring of support for our schools, and I have no doubt those qualities will continue for years to come.

WILKE continued on page 2

Watertown-Mayer Superintendent Retires

School board to fast-track hiring process

Superintendent Ron Wilke announced his retirement at the most recent Watertown-Mayer School Board meeting effective July 31, 2020. Wilke cited health reasons for his decision. The school board immediately contracted with superintendent search firm School Exec Connect to begin a process to find a replacement with as little transition time as possible in order for the district to continue momentum on key initiatives.

“We have a number of very high priority projects underway that require direct guidance from administration,” said Stacy Unowski, chair of the Watertown-Mayer School Board. “Construction projects are underway thanks to voters who approved our bond referendum, and a number of educational programmatic initiatives are underway using voter approved operating levy dollars. We also have back-to-school during a pandemic to manage. We felt an interim superintendent would not be as effective in leading these projects.”

School Exec Connect officials believe that there are quality candidates available that could be able to start as soon as August, and advised the board that a quick turnaround was possible. Contingency plans are in place, however. If a new superintendent can't start in August, Wilke is available to fill in as a short-term interim superintendent. And if quality candidates that are a good fit for the district are not available, the board can still choose to hire a long-term interim and conduct a longer search process.

Please look for more information on the superintendent search process under the About Us tab on the Watertown-Mayer district website. 

WILKE from page 1

Working together, we have accomplished much over the past five years, and while the current situation is filled with many challenges, I believe the future remains bright for the Watertown-Mayer School District. I have no doubt the district will continue to deliver on its mission of “growth through connections and opportunities”.

Thank you for the opportunity you have provided me to serve and to be a part of the Watertown-Mayer team. The Watertown-Mayer School District will always hold a very special place in my memories and in my heart. Go Royals!

With Thanks and Gratitude,
Ron Wilke

All Means All

As we set sail on summer and move into the 2020-2021 school year, we often reflect on the beginning of the previous year's goals hoping we have met the mark we set. With our Core Values as a guide, we have worked hard as a district and are committed to doing what's right, acting with purpose, working together, meeting the needs of who we serve, and implementing innovative solutions in an ever-changing environment. Our Vision 2019 Statements reflect the vision of our district and will continue to guide us as we work to update our strategic roadmap in the near future.

- All means all...no exceptions
- All students engaged in authentic and intentional learning experiences for future success
- A safe, welcoming, and inclusive school environment that takes into account social, emotional, and physical well-being.
- The district is held in highest regard among its stakeholders and beyond
- Financial stability and sound resource management

CORE VALUES

Celebrating Watertown-Mayer Graduates



DISTANCE LEARNING

Watertown-Mayer parents provide end-of-the-year feedback on distance learning

As the school year came to a close, Watertown-Mayer asked families to reflect on the last several weeks of distance learning, as well as their expectations and thoughts on what the upcoming school year would look like. The results? Positive, but not as satisfied as when they were surveyed in the beginning of April.

The second survey saw 440 participants (an increase of 95) of 918 families surveyed – a response rate of 48%. More than two thirds of respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with distance learning, down from 90% in the first survey. Student stress and parent fatigue were cited as the two biggest influences on lower satisfaction ratings. Looking into the future, 72% of respondents said they were comfortable sending their students back to school in the fall should buildings be open.

“Knowing the Covid-19 pandemic is still likely to be a threat when we welcome students and staff back to school in the fall, we are unsure of what our new normal will be,” said Superintendent Ron Wilke. “We have been directed by the state to develop three plans, one for a regular start to the school year, one for distance learning and one for a hybrid of in-person and distance learning.”

Any plan would include measures to ensure the safety of students, staff, and community members. The state will provide further guidance to schools at the end of July. Watertown-Mayer staff will use guidance from the state as well as the survey data to finalize plans and communicate them to the public.

More information can be found at www.wm.k12.mn.us.

Dated Material. Deliver Promptly

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POSTAL PATRONS
in School District 111

Find Watertown-Mayer
on Social Media



#GoRoyals

At Watertown-Mayer Public Schools, we make authentic learning connections with each of our students, providing them with the opportunity to reach the full potential of their passions and strengths.

Bond Referendum Projects Moving Forward

While the majority of the actual construction won't begin until spring of 2021, a tremendous amount of work to prepare for that construction has been completed over the past several months.

Design teams from across the district have been meeting with architects from the Cunningham Group to develop the schematic and final designs needed to prepare construction documents in advance of requests for bids on the projects scheduled to go out early fall. As a reminder, the major portions of the projects include remodeling of the commons/pod areas at the elementary school, remodeling of the high school and middle school media centers, remodeling of the high school career tech ed areas of the building, and a complete renovation of the MS/HS cafeteria and kitchen areas.



The project also includes rebuilding the outdoor stadium and athletic facilities at the middle school/high school site, along with improvements in traffic flow in the main parking lot on that site. This work would not have been possible if it wasn't for a voter approved facilities/bond levy to pay for classroom modernization, outdoor education and activities, parking lot safety, and long-term maintenance. Thank you. 🏰

To learn more about the projects, go to the Facilities & Planning link under the About Us tab at www.wm.k12.mn.us