



# SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER



## A MESSAGE FROM THE 4K DIRECTOR

Hello Parent(s) or Guardian(s),

It is hard to believe that we will be already four weeks into the 2023-2024 school year. The beginning of the school year has had its ups and downs, but overall the 4K program is a wonderful success. Much of that success belongs to the parents. Through your patience and cooperation we were able to get the 155 4 year olds enrolled moving down a positive path for future success in their educational career.

I have been out to visit all the sites over the last four weeks and have seen many pleasant sights. One of the sights that stand out in my mind is the joy and enthusiasm that I have seen on the faces of 4 year old Kindergartens. No matter where I am, the excitement and pride that exuberates from the students when they finish a project, or they learn something new, or when they meet a new friend is truly heartwarming.

As I travel I notice that the themes and the material covered in each classroom is the same. The teachers and instructional aides have been working very hard at communicating with each other to make sure that your child is getting the best experience possible. Two new topics that we will be talking about this school year are Heggerty Phonemic Awareness and Handwriting (more information [later on in the newsletter](#)).

This just confirms in me that the West De Pere School District has hired the best teachers for your four year child.

I thank you for your continued emails and contacts about a variety of topics. I also thank you for your patience and understanding as we continue this journey together to create the best 4K program around.

Sincerely,

Mr. Mike Kowalczyk  
Hemlock Creek Associate Principal and 4K Director





# HOW DO I BECOME A VOLUTNEER?

**Step 1:** Fill out the [School District of West De Pere Volunteer Form](#)

**Step 2:** Once you have been selected by the teacher to attend a Field Trip you will be sent a link from the 4K Clerical Aide to fill out the Background Check form.

**Step 3:** You will be notified by the teacher to confirm you are approved to attend the field trip.

**PLEASE NOTE:** If you have other children in the district and think you may already have a background check on file, but aren't sure, please reach out to [jschnurer@wdpsd.com](mailto:jschnurer@wdpsd.com).



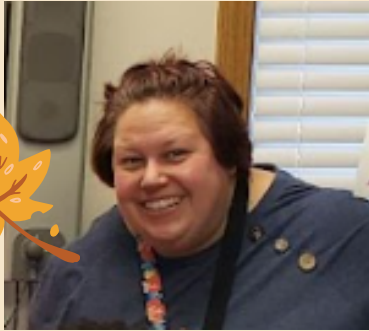
## UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES:

- September 27:** 4K Picture Day - **Westwood**
- September 29:** West De Pere High School Homecoming Noise Parade, 5:30-6:30 p.m.
- October 2:** BerryLand Field Trip (Encompass and Kiddie College)
- October 3:** BerryLand Field Trip (WW - Chouinard and Dugre)
- October 3:** Westwood PTO Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Westwood
- October 3:** Hemlock Creek PTO Meeting, 6:00 p.m. at Hemlock Creek
- October 4:** BerryLand Field Trip (WW - Torres)
- October 6:** No 4K (Early Release)
- October 9:** Indigenous Peoples' Day
- October 9:** Columbus Day
- October 10:** 4K Picture Day - **Encompass**
- October 11:** 4K Picture Day - **Kiddie College**
- October 18:** West De Pere School Board Meeting, 5:30-7:30 p.m. (Annual Meeting at the High School)
- October 19:** No 4K (Early Release)
- October 20:** No 4K
- October 31:** Halloween
- November 5K** Daylight Savings (Fall back)
- November 7:** Westwood PTO Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Westwood
- November 7:** Hemlock Creek PTO Meeting, 6:00 p.m. at Hemlock Creek
- November 7:** Election Day (remember to vote) Veterans Day
- November 22:** NO 4K (Early Release)
- November 23:** No 4K (Thanksgiving Day)
- November 24:** No 4K (Native American Heritage Day)



# 4K

# MEET OUR TERRIFIC TEACHERS...



**TRACY  
BISICK**  
KIDDIE  
COLLEGE

Tracy was born and raised in the Green Bay area. After graduating Tracy attended Carroll in Waukesha where she got her Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education with an Early Childhood minor. Since graduating Tracy began teaching preschool in a daycare setting for a couple of years, she then moved on to Head Start, where she taught the past 16 years. Tracy's true passion is working with this age group. She loves how full of wonder and curiosity they are...it makes every day a new adventure!

Cassidy is excited to start a new year in the 4k classroom where she will provide additional support to students within Mrs. Dugres' classroom.

Cassidy understands that each student is unique and comes with their own set of strengths, challenges, and aspirations. Cassidy's primary goal is to provide a personalized and engaging educational experience that meets the needs of each student on her caseload. Through a combination of specialized instruction, individualized support, and a strong emphasis on fostering independence, Cassidy aims to help students flourish and reach their fullest potential in 4k!

**CASSIDY  
CHERNEY**  
WESTWOOD  
SPECIAL EDUCATION



**EMMA  
CHOUINARD**  
WESTWOOD

This is Emma's 2nd year teaching 4K in West De Pere. In May of 2022, Emma graduated from St. Norbert College with a degree in Elementary Education and a certification in Early Childhood.

Emma is originally from Glenwood City, WI; however, she has lived in the De Pere area for the past four years.

When Emma is not at school, she loves being outside, whether it's training for marathons, snowboarding in the winter, hanging out with her family at their cabin, or getting frozen custard at Zesty's. Emma and her husband Hogan have a Goldendoodle named Ellie, who is full of energy but loves to snuggle. Therefore, the students might hear a story from time to time about the silly things she does.



## KRISTY DUGRE WESTWOOD

Kristy received her teaching degree in Education with a minor in Early Childhood from St. Norbert College. Kristy taught half day and full day Kindergarten in Appleton for 4 years before deciding to stay home with her own children for a few years. Then she was fortunate enough to become a part of West De Pere's new 4K program in 2008...Kristy is very proud and excited to welcome your family to the 15th year of the 4K program!

Kristy and her husband Jeff have a fun family which keeps them busy! They have 6 great kids between the ages of 18-26: McKenzie, Connor, Carter, Tyas, Cadence, and Sophie; and a rescue dog named Bubba!

Kristy enjoys living in West De Pere and you just might see her when she is out and about! Kristy enjoys walking her dog, working on DIY projects, going up north, and spending time watching her kids participate in their numerous activities!

Catherine has worked in the West De Pere School District for 31 years. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Human Development and in Elementary Education with a certification to teach grades 4K-6 from UW-Green Bay. Catherine received her Master's Degree in Education from Marian College.

Catherine and her husband have three wonderful children. Her family likes to travel and experience different foods, cultures and places together. Catherine puts her family and faith at the center of her life. Her deep love and commitment to her family extends into her classroom where she will love and care for your child and try to give your child everything she would want for her own children in school.

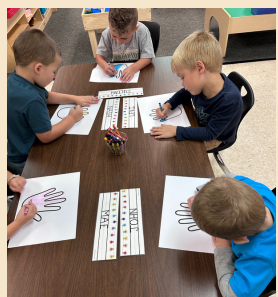
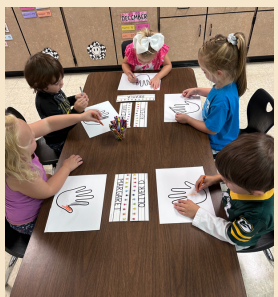
## CATHERINE SEIDL ENCOMPASS



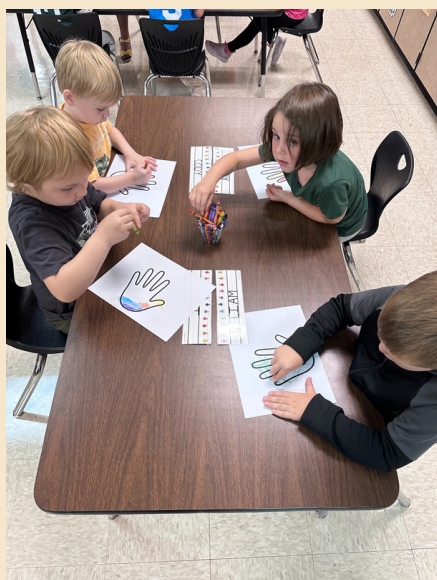
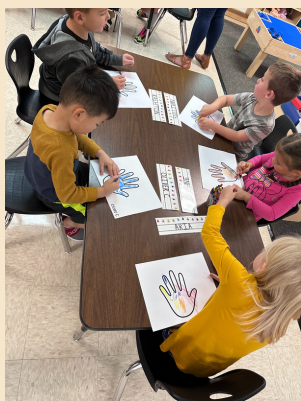
## JENNIFER TORRES WESTWOOD

Jennifer lives in the Appleton area with her husband and their three-year-old daughter, Isabella. She graduated from UW Oshkosh with her bachelor's degree in elementary education in 2017. This is her seventh year of teaching 4K. When she's not in the classroom, she loves spending time with her family, going on long walks, reading, playing board games, doing puzzles, baking, and watching movies. Jennifer's favorite colors are blue and pink, she loves fall and when eating, her favorites are breakfast foods and popcorn!

# BEGINNING OF THE YEAR FUN...



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## INTRODUCTION



Dear Parents and Caregivers,

At school your child is engaging in Heggerty Phonological Awareness lessons. **Phonological awareness** allows children to recognize and work with the sounds of language. These activities are sometimes called ear exercises because the focus is on hearing the parts or sounds in words. Your child will not be seeing these words in print during phonological awareness instruction. Towards the second half of the year, your student will be working on primarily **phonemic awareness**, a subset a phonological awareness focused specifically on hearing individual sounds in words.

### Why is Phonological Awareness Important?

Phonological awareness is a strong predictor of reading success. It is especially important at the earliest stages of reading development and is a foundation for reading.

### How Can You Support Phonological Awareness at Home?

Throughout the school year, you will receive newsletters sharing ideas of games or “ear exercises” you can play with your child. Phonological awareness is simple to support at home - all you need is language! Help your child understand that the words they hear in speech are made up of parts and sounds.

You can begin building phonological awareness in your child by:

- ★ Reciting nursery rhymes
- ★ Reading books with rhyming words
- ★ Playing with alliteration (words that begin with the same sound)
  - Example: Seven silly sisters said surprise!
- ★ Reciting tongue twisters with a focus on individual sounds in words.
  - Example: How much wood would a woodchuck chuck, if a woodchuck could chuck wood?

We look forward to supporting you and your child in building foundational literacy skills this school year! In addition to the newsletters you will receive, you can find more support and information on our website and social media pages.

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Visit our website: <https://www.heggerty.org>

View lesson demonstrations: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLgsyZIEkrFNqKexKvY83a6i3F8tz7c4TF>