

UNITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

EXPECT GREAT THINGS

2026-2027



September 2026

Principal's Report

Sarah Engstrom-Yde, Unity Elementary School Principal



DISTRICT VISION & MISSION

Vision: Our Vision is to be the leading school district in Wisconsin where every student reaches their highest potential.

Mission: Our Mission is to empower every student to thrive as a successful citizen in partnership with our vibrant community.

OUR STUDENTS

Unity Elementary students in 1st - 4th grade were welcomed back for the first day of school on September 1st, 2026! All 1st - 4th grade Unity Eagle students gathered together in the gymnasium for an all-school assembly where students reviewed and practiced following assembly expectations, met new students and staff members, and played a quick game of *This or That?* Meanwhile, Kindergarten and 4K students completed individual "Ready-Set-Go" conferences with their classroom teacher and caregivers during the first two days of school.

Excitement was in the air throughout the first week at UES as students engaged in learning, connected with friends, and enjoyed activities like recess, Specials, and lunch. New this year, all students have the opportunity to choose between breakfast or recess when they arrive at school each morning. So far, students have enthusiastically embraced having additional recess time with their friends before the school day officially begins. Finally, it is worth noting that our elementary school enrollment is strong with 343 students registered for grades 4K - 4th as of September 8, 2026. We are all looking forward to having an excellent 2026-2027 school year!



OUR STAFF

Unity Elementary School (UES) Staff spent the final two weeks of August engaging in various staff in-service trainings and special events to prepare for the upcoming 2026-2027 school year! The theme for UES this year is “The Power of Presence” and staff members were able to kick off their first staff meeting by making a web as they shared about themselves and chose one word that captures their unique contribution to our Unity Eagle team. Teachers received specialized training in implementing our new SpringMath program which will help us meet the needs of all K - 4th grade students through classwide, group, or individual interventions based on weekly data that is collected for each child. Teachers were also provided an opportunity to “shop” for classroom supplies thanks to a generous donation from the Jiliot family. Finally, as the new Elementary Principal, I have been actively meeting with staff members for 1:1 conversations with the goal of meeting with every certified and support staff member at UES by the end of September. Hearing about the dedication and passion of our educators to serve our students as well as identifying ways that I can support them in this work has been an absolute joy!

Now that our students have returned, our collective efforts have shifted to ensuring that all students are supported and trained in the Eagle way – to be Safe, Respectful, Responsible, and Ready – each and every day! I want to highlight some of the ways that our amazing team works to serve our students with excellence: custodial and maintenance staff provide clean and safe classrooms and facilities; cafeteria staff prepare and serve healthy meals; educational assistants and student services personnel work with individual students to reach their unique goals; office staff greet students, staff, and families with warmth and support; teachers plan and execute daily lessons to move each student’s learning forward. Together, we are all dedicated to making Unity Elementary School a joyful, positive place for kids!



OUR FAMILIES & COMMUNITY

Building strong family and community partnerships is at the heart of what makes Unity Elementary School a strong and supportive place for kids to come to school each day. This starts with each of our 4K and Kindergarten families attending a 45-minute, one-on-one conference with their classroom teacher before they begin attending school with their classmates. Our 4K and K teachers completed about 120 of these "Ready-Set-Go" conferences on September 1st and 2nd which enables our staff and families to build a solid foundation of collaboration and communication with one another.

In addition, our families and community had opportunities to help their student(s) prepare for the school year at back-to-school events for students of all ages. At the Round Lake Community Center "Back to School Bash" on August 20, students, their families, and staff members gathered together for an amazing evening of activities. This included registration, school supply pick-up, a friendly game of kick-ball, BINGO, food and more! Then, during the Unity School District Open House on August 24th, all 4K - 12th graders and their families had an opportunity to meet teachers, take school pictures, and connect with various school and community resources/organizations. We look forward to creating amazing memories together with our students, their families, and the community this year. For example, on Friday morning, September 4th, elementary and middle school students were welcomed to school by the UHS Football team! There has never been a better time than now to call yourself a Unity Eagle and we enthusiastically look forward to an exceptional 2026-2027 school year!



UNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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#UNITYSCHOOL

"EXPECT GREAT THINGS"

#UNITYEAGLEPRIDE



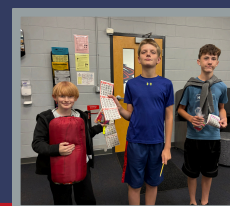
Middle School Board Report September 2026

WELCOME BACK!

Unity Middle School has started the school year with energy and enthusiasm, focusing on building connections, celebrating student success, and preparing for a year of growth and achievement.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL EXCITEMENT

The school year opened with an energetic assembly featuring staff introductions, walk-up songs, and a shared vision for the year. Students reviewed expectations and participated in relationship-building activities throughout the day before finishing with an all-school bingo event featuring great prizes, including a tent, camping chair, and sleeping bag.



TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

The school year is off to a strong start with our shared iPad model, providing students access to technology in the classroom when it directly supports learning. Our intentional approach to technology use is off to a great start, thanks to the support of our talented teachers, engaged students, and supportive families. We are excited about the opportunities this model will provide for a great year of learning!

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 9th: Cahill Fall Sports Pictures	September 21st: MS Volleyball @ Frederic
September 10th: MS Football @ Unity vs Hayward MS Volleyball @ Spooner	September 22nd: MS Football @ Cumberland MS Volleyball @ Ladysmith
September 14th: MS Volleyball @ Unity vs Luck	September 24th: Picture Re-Take Day! MS Volleyball @ Unity vs Rice Lake
September 15th: MS Football @ Unity vs Webster MS Volleyball @ Cumberland	September 25th: Homecoming - Early Release @ 1pm
September 17th: Power of Youth Presentation (7-12 Grade) 2:15pm, PAC MS Cross Country Meet @ Unity	September 28th: MS CC @ Cumberland MS Volleyball @ Unity vs Hayward
	September 21st: MS Volleyball @ Unity vs SCF

GO EAGLES!



HIGH SCHOOL

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT: SEPTEMBER 2026

WELCOME BACK EAGLES!

UNITY HIGH SCHOOL WELCOMED STUDENTS BACK WITH A RECORD-BREAKING OPEN HOUSE ON AUGUST 24, WITH MORE THAN 80% OF OUR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT BODY JOINING US TO LEARN ABOUT THE YEAR AHEAD!

THE EXCITEMENT CONTINUED AS WE OFFICIALLY KICKED OFF THE 2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR WITH AN AMAZING FIRST DAY ON SEPTEMBER 1, 2026. IT HAS BEEN WONDERFUL TO SEE SO MANY SMILING FACES, POSITIVE ENERGY, AND ENGAGED ATTITUDES THROUGHOUT THE BUILDING. WE ARE OFF TO A FANTASTIC START, EAGLES! 🦅
HERE'S TO A GREAT YEAR AHEAD — EXPECT GREAT THINGS!

HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING UPDATE

UNITY HIGH SCHOOL BEGINS THE 2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR WITH A TOTAL ENROLLMENT OF 253 STUDENTS DISTRIBUTED ACROSS GRADE LEVELS AS FOLLOWS:

FRESHMEN: 64

SOPHOMORES: 54

JUNIORS: 60

SENIORS: 75



On Friday, September 4, 2026, Unity High School hosted its annual **Day of Service!** 🦅
Students traveled with their HOM teachers and groups to various locations throughout our district to engage in meaningful community service. From highway clean-up efforts to helping at our local C.R.A. shelter, working on projects at The Woods Golf Course in Balsam Lake, and much more, our students showed up ready to serve!
Our students did a **standout job representing Unity School District** and demonstrated what it truly means to be **honorary citizens** in our community. Their hard work, positive attitudes, and willingness to give back made us incredibly proud.

Way to go, Eagles! 🦅 We are proud of you!



HIGH SCHOOL

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT: JULY 2026

HIGH SCHOOL STARTS: READ TO RISE



READ TO RISE IS A SCHOOL-WIDE INDEPENDENT READING INITIATIVE DESIGNED TO BUILD A STRONGER CULTURE OF READING AT UNITY HIGH SCHOOL WHILE GIVING STUDENTS GREATER OWNERSHIP AND CHOICE IN WHAT THEY READ. AS PART OF THE INITIATIVE, THE ENTIRE HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING DEDICATES THE FIRST 10-12 MINUTES OF HOM EACH DAY TO INDEPENDENT READING, CREATING A CONSISTENT SCHOOL-WIDE ROUTINE IN WHICH BOTH STUDENTS AND STAFF.....READ! STUDENTS SELECT BOOKS THAT GENUINELY INTEREST THEM AND READ BOOKS SEPARATE FROM THEIR ASSIGNED CLASSROOM READING. THE GOAL IS TO ESTABLISH CONSISTENT READING HABITS, INCREASE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT, AND HELP STUDENTS RECOGNIZE READING AS BOTH AN ACADEMIC SKILL AND A LIFELONG TOOL FOR PERSONAL GROWTH.

DURING TRIMESTERS I & II, STUDENTS WILL ENGAGE IN STRUCTURED ACTIVITIES THAT ENCOURAGE THEM TO THINK CRITICALLY ABOUT THEIR READING AND SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH OTHERS. THESE INCLUDE STUDENT-LED DISCUSSIONS, JOURNAL REFLECTIONS, AND A FINAL WRITTEN BOOK REVIEW. STUDENTS ALSO HAVE SCHEDULED OPPORTUNITIES TO VISIT THE LIBRARY AND SELECT BOOKS THAT ALIGN WITH THEIR INTERESTS AND READING GOALS. BY PROTECTING DEDICATED READING TIME ACROSS THE ENTIRE BUILDING, READ TO RISE SEEKS TO CREATE A SHARED CULTURE IN WHICH READING IS VALUED, CELEBRATED, AND VIEWED AS AN IMPORTANT PART OF EVERY STUDENT'S GROWTH AND SUCCESS! LOOKING FOR SOMETHING FUN TO DO? STOP IN AND READ WITH THE STUDENTS. ALL TEACHERS AND BUILDING STAFF MEMBERS ARE BEING ENCOURAGED TO READ RIGHT ALONG WITH THE STUDENTS.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- September 20 – Homecoming Decorations & Grill Out
- September 23 – Drive Your Tractor to School Day
- September 25 – Homecoming
 - Senior Sunrise
 - Homecoming Parade- Centuria, WI.
 - Homecoming Community Picnic
 - Homecoming Football Game
- September 26 – Homecoming Dance



SEPTEMBER 2026

SPECIAL EDUCATION BOARD REPORT



Special Education Staffing: A Strong Start to the Year

This school year began with a level of staffing consistency in Special Education that Unity has not experienced in several years. All certified special education staff returned, providing continuity for students, families, and colleagues. We also continued working with the same contracted providers for speech and language, occupational therapy, audiology, and physical therapy, further strengthening that consistency. While our certified staffing remained stable, we welcomed five new Educational Assistants who joined our team to provide individualized support to students with disabilities. We are excited to introduce these new team members and highlight the experience and strengths they bring to our students and schools.

Ellarose Zurfluh



Ellarose is working in the High School and Eagle Care Club. Originally from East Texas, Ellarose previously lived in the Balsam Lake area for several years in the early 2000s. Her diverse professional background includes experience in graphic design, finance, and education. She enjoys crafting and spending time outdoors. She and her daughter recently returned to the area and are excited to begin this new chapter in their lives.

Grace Van Someren



Grace will begin in the Elementary September 21. Grace is a mother of three and lives on a hobby farm with chickens and pigs. Growing up as one of eight siblings, family is very important to her, and she enjoys spending time with her nieces and nephews. In her free time, she enjoys being outdoors, especially hunting with her dogs and participating in her family's annual Thanksgiving deer-hunting tradition.

Jenny Hensel



Jenny is excited to join Unity as an Elementary Special Education Assistant and brings extensive experience working with children. She and her husband have six children, including three they adopted, and she has 12 years of experience as a childcare teacher and center director, along with eight years as a foster parent. She is passionate about helping children feel valued, supported, and equipped for success. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her family and being outdoors.

Lily Peterson



Lily is originally from Maryland and moved to Wisconsin last December with her cat, Mimi. She enjoys creating ceramics and playing The Legend of Zelda, and is currently working her way through Twilight Princess. Lily is excited to join Unity as an Elementary Special Education Assistant and looks forward to learning and growing alongside the team.

Patrick Tepoorten



Pat joins Unity as an Elementary Special Education Assistant after 18 years as a Community Relations Coordinator at North Branch Area Public Schools. He brings extensive school-district experience and is excited for the opportunity to work directly with students. Pat and his wife, LeAnn, have four children and four grandchildren. Outside of work, he enjoys fishing, hockey, golf, music, and spending time outdoors with his family.



DOTL Board Report

September 2026

NEW TEACHER INDUCTION AND MENTORING PROGRAM

The 2026-27 New Teacher Induction and Mentoring Program launched on August 13th with a full day PD session titled *Evidence Informed Teaching*. Teachers in Year 1 or 2 in our district, along with their mentors, attended this event. This session aimed to raise awareness of the research base that underpins effective practices while also dedicating a large portion of the day for new teachers and mentors to practice these strategies. This event was held in collaboration with Grantsburg School District as part of the Peer Review and Mentoring Grant that was awarded to our district this summer to fund this work.

Two mentors will be attending a CESA 11 Mentor Training along with Trent on September 18th as a learning opportunity to strengthen our mentorship practices in our district. This small team will bring back ideas on how to better support mentors in doing this important work effectively.

The Peer Review and Mentoring Grant award has also funded subscriptions for our new teachers and mentors to a professional learning platform called Steplab. This resource will support the implementation of action steps stemming from the *Evidence Informed Teaching* PD day. Additionally, new teachers and mentors were given the book *Teach Like a Champion* as a reference text for evidence informed teaching strategies.

GIFTED & TALENTED GRANT

Unity School District was awarded funding through DPI's Gifted and Talented Grant to hire for a part-time Gifted and Talented Teacher. This position will have a mathematics emphasis because of what the needs assessment revealed during the grant application process. This teacher will work with grades 3-8.

Additionally, this grant project includes consulting services to focus on implementing GT instructional programming, including an evaluation of how our programming is impacting Native students.

SpringMath Launch

Students in grades K-4 are all using a new Math supplement program called SpringMath. Students in need of additional instructional support at the middle school are also eligible for SpringMath.

This instructional approach is intended to increase mathematical fluency through a daily routine that includes student collaboration and individual practice.

SpringMath will empower our teachers and interventionists with actionable data points to inform next steps in instruction. The first week has been a success in terms of student and staff excitement!

INTERVENTION UPDATES

ELA

Literacy interventions went through a program evaluation last spring that determined a need for a stronger menu of evidence-based interventions for our staff to select from. Our Teaching and Learning Team is working to clarify why we will use specific interventions to support students' next steps in learning. New resources we have on hand are:

- 1 - REWARDS (advanced vocabulary and fluency)
- 2 - Sound Partners (foundational skills)
- 3 - Phonics for Reading (advanced decoding and comprehension)

Math

We are excited to have our new math interventionist position in place. Kelsey Bazey has done a tremendous job creating a purposeful schedule of K-8 Math interventions as well as coaching our two Math Corps tutors.

EXPECT GREAT THINGS!