

4201 South Union
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Dr. Bill Szakacs Principal
Mrs. Emily Behrens, Dean

Des Moines
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SEPTEMBER 2015

South Union Elementary

Mission: South Union exists to prepare students to be productive citizens through academics, arts, and wellness **Vision:** Dedicated to Success Everyday

Principal News

Dr. Bill Szakacs, Principal

Dear Parents and Citizens of the South Union School Community:

Hello and welcome back! The school year at SU is off to a wonderful start. We could not be more pleased with how students have responded and are enjoying the start of a new school year. Also, teachers and staff have worked very hard this summer preparing the building; attending professional learning sessions, and studying new ways to meet the needs of our students.

In order to meet the needs of our students every day, we need your help, too. We are expecting a lot of good things from our students this year and we need your support helping them reach their learning goals. Students will be challenged this year; you will see additional homework at the upper grade levels, and students in K-2 will be learning at an accelerated pace. The goal is not only to prepare students academically, but enhance their social, emotional, and friendship skills, too. We want all students to have a great learning experience at SU.

With that being said...your cooperation is important to the process. When students arrive home with school information, please read it. If your child needs something signed and

returned to school, please help us by signing the form and return it to school. If a teacher asks you to help in the classroom, and you can make it happen, please help us. Your partnership with the school is so important and your child will appreciate that you have an invested interest in their education and development. We are certainly all in this together.

One way to improve your connection with the school is to attend the monthly PTO (Parent/Teacher Organization) meetings; which are held the first Tuesday of every month at 6:00 p.m. The first meeting of this year is scheduled on: September 8, 3015 @ 6:00 p.m. All PTO meetings are held in the library.

We have a lot of exciting things planned for students and the community this year. In the weeks and months to come, you will learn about these opportunities to get involved with the school. SU has great potential to one of the best teaching and learning elementary schools in the state. We have a lot of pride; well-educated instructional team; and support staff that is second to none. We have what it takes to reach our goals this year and I'm look-

ing forward to being part of the team to make it happen.

Please feel free to visit the school; call us with ideas, suggestions to consider that could help us get better, and help when you can. It is a privilege to work with children and families in order to improve the lives of the community. SU is a community of learners and we are grateful for the opportunity to serve your child. Have a wonderful fall and cheer on your favorite football team. Go Rails!

Warmest regards,

Dr. Szakacs, Principal

Important Dates

PTO Meeting Sept 8 6:00 pm SU Library

Boy Scouts Registration Sept 17 7:00 pm SU
Cafeteria-enter from East parking lot

Instrument try-out Sept 14 6-8 pm Lincoln HS

Picture Day October 8

School Hours

- School Hours: 8:15am-3:00pm
- Main Doors Open: 8:00am
- Breakfast in the Classroom: 8:00am

Students are tardy if they arrive later than 8:15am.

Every Wednesday Early Dismissal at 1:30pm

Dean of Students

Mrs. Emily Behrens

The first week at South Union has been a success! It is always fun to see the students arrive the first day with excitement in their eyes and smiles on their faces. We've made some changes at South Union this year.

Many of you have heard about our building wide expectations from your child or the letter we sent home. This year we are working on being Respectful, Responsible, and Ready to Learn. Along with the building expectations come rewards! Giving feedback is essential to learning. Students are earning rail bucks when they are spotted being respectful, responsible, and ready to learn. They can receive rail bucks from any adult in the building. Once a week a traveling store will come to each classroom. Students may buy things with their rail bucks. In addition to the store students may buy privileges from their classroom teacher. Each class-

room has come up with a list of privilege rewards. Ask your child about the rewards in their classroom.

Another change at South Union is happening in the cafeteria and on the playground. This year we have created more space in our schedules. Only one grade level will occupy the cafeteria at a time. The same goes for the playground. The spacing in our schedule this year allows for a quieter eating environment and a less crowded playground. The children and staff seem to be enjoying these changes.

Lastly, we've created some time in our Wednesday schedule for exploration time. Students and teachers will have class time on Wednesdays to dig a little deeper in science and social science topics while blending all curricular (reading, writing, math, science, social studies) areas. We look forward to

some fun projects that apply real life skills. Each month we have a theme for our Wednesdays. September's theme is community in the classroom and friendship.

Remember you can follow South Union on Twitter at @sudmps. Our Twitter page is a place for announcements, sharing of pictures, and happenings at South Union.

I look forward to serving our school community this year. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you are in need of assistance or have questions about South Union.

We will do parent teacher conference sign up through an online application this year. More information to come soon.

News from the Nurse

Hello everyone. I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Mrs. Richman and I am the new school nurse at South Union. I have had the opportunity to meet many parents/families at meet the teacher night as well as seeing many students in my office. We are off to a busy year!

Reminders for families at the beginning of the year:

Medications: Any medications that are to be taken at school must be in the original prescription bottle and given to the nurse. Parental permission forms must also be completed before any meds can be administered at school. This is a school board policy and strictly followed.

Student Illness: Students are expected to be at school unless they are running a temp or vomiting. Please call the office @ 242-

8409 before 9am if your child will be absent or tardy.

Immunizations: If your student needs more shots please follow up with your doctor as soon as possible, and return the completed immunization form to my office.

Due to the growing number of peanut/nut allergies I am asking that any snacks that are brought to school for birthdays, etc. are peanut free. Some teachers are even suggesting stickers/erasers in place of snacks.

Healthy Tips to reduce the possibility of illness:

Remind your student about good hand washing practices

Please keep your child home if they are experiencing a fever, vomiting or diarrhea.
No sharing of homemade food at school.

Thank you !!

Mrs. Richman

Art Ms. Wilson

Art News

Welcome back to the Art Studio!

Parents you may want to check with your child to see which day of the week they have Art scheduled this school year. I am looking forward to another year filled with creative ideas!

Ms. Wilson



Music Mrs. Peterson

Music News



We are off and running with a new year! 4th and 5th grade student in **after school chorus**: we meet on Mondays 3:00-3:30. **Permission slips are due Monday, Sept. 14.** That is also the date of our first rehearsal!

Concert dates are set!!!

Kindergarten – Thurs. Feb. 11 12:45 PM

1st Grade – Thurs. Feb. 11 2:00 PM

2nd Grade - Thurs. March 10
12:45 PM

3rd Grade – Thurs. March 10
2:00 PM

4th Grade – Thurs. April 28 2:00 PM

5th Grade – Thurs. April 28
12:45 PM

****All concerts are held in the South Union Gymnasium.**

Physical Education Mrs. Anderson

Students are very active in PE running, jumping, and moving around in the gym. It is very important they wear proper shoes on the day they have PE to make sure they are safe. Tennis shoes or athletic shoes are the best on PE days.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Helpful hint

If you are unsure of when your child has P.E. have them keep a pair of tennis shoes in their backpack or locker so they are always prepared!



Behavior Specialist Mr. Puderbaugh

It is great to see our children back from their summer break. As I greet students in the breakfast line, monitor the lunch room, and visit classroom I see smiling faces glad to be back and learning.

The first few days of school has been full of getting to know others in our school community. Students have been learning about the new rail buck incentives and the expectations to keep our environment focused on learning. I am pleased to say that our students are being respectful, responsible, and showing us they are ready to learn.

I want to thank parents for supporting our expectations and sending your child to school ready to learn each day. It is going to be a great year with a lot of

growth for our students both academically and socially.

James Puderbaugh

Behavior Specialist

South Union Elementary

New Staff Members we welcome this year:

New Staff at South Union

Kathryn Karr-Kindergarten

Emily Robinson-4th Grade

Brain Phillips-Special Education

Montana Van Sickle-ELL

Nicole Webb- K-3 Interventionist

Ranae Crise-Associate

Counselor's Corner

Ms. Jennifer Roberts



Welcome back! I'm looking forward to another great year at South Union! We are getting to know each other in the counseling office at the beginning of the year. I've seen lots of familiar faces along with many new ones, and it's always exciting to get to know more about each student. Our schedule will be jam-packed with lessons that all students can benefit from

throughout their lives. Arts and Wellness teachers will also be implementing some Yoga practices this year - using breathing and posture to improve thinking skills, problem solving, and coping skills. We are excited to give these skills to students so they can become even more successful at school and in the community!

Food Service

Breakfast Program:

Free to all SU students

Lunch Program:

Free to all SU students

Adult lunch \$3.30

If you would like to join your child for lunch please notify the classroom teacher and send money with your child in the morning. Exact change is appreciated.

Additional Information

Band and Orchestra!

Are you interested in your student joining band or orchestra? Students in 4th and 5th grade are able to join orchestra and students in 5th grade may join band! Mrs. Hecht is the orchestra teacher and Mrs. Smith is the band teacher at South Union. We will be visiting students and demonstrating all the different instruments they can choose to play. Parents will be receiving information on how to register students for band or orchestra and should return the forms to their teacher or to the office.

Students may also come to our Instrument Try Out Night on Monday, September 14th from 6-8pm at Lincoln High School in the Commons Area to try out any of the different instruments to see

what they might be interested in playing. For more information please contact either Mrs. Smith at sarah.smtih01@dmschools.org or Mrs. Hecht at diana.hecht-gahman@dmschools.org. You may also visit the band website for registration forms and information at www.dmsouthsideband.weebly.com Thank you!

EQUITY STATEMENT

The Des Moines Independent Community School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact the district's Equity Coordinator

District Mission Statement

"Des Moines Public Schools exist so graduates possess knowledge, skills, and abilities to be successful in the next stage of their lives."

Persons with disabilities who need information about accessibility or who need sign or language interpreters, please contact the Director of Student and Family Services, (515) 242-7714