

# HAMLIN SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 28-3

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Dear Hamlin Parents,

Welcome back to another wonderful year at Hamlin school. Summer went fast, but the school year started off strong. I want to take a moment to let inform you of some changes happening this year.

We welcomed 6 new staff members to our middle and high school staff. Ms. Bailey Schlotterbeck is our new Agriculture teacher and FFA advisor. Mr. Tucker Christie teaches 6th grade science, 7th grade social studies and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Health. He is also an assistant football and wrestling coach for our district. Mr. Nate McMullen is our new Building Trades and Woodworking instructor. Ms. Carissa Kellar is working in our Special Education Department. Mrs. Erin Rosenlund is our high school study hall monitor. Mrs. Chellie Sweeny is a paraprofessional in middle school. We are excited to add quality people to our already great staff!

With each new school year, it is always a necessity to evaluate policies and procedures to see where changes and improvements are needed. With the recent national buzz concerning cell phone use in schools, we have modified our cell phone policy. High school students will be required to turn their cell phones in to a pouch at the beginning of every class period, which teachers will use to take attendance. If a student does not have a cell phone or you choose to keep your child's phone at home, please inform the school, and we will have an alternative way to take their attendance. High school students will be able to have their phones in between classes and at lunchtime. Middle school students will still be required to keep their cell phones and smart watches in their lockers. Additionally, students are not allowed to take pictures of other students or employees of the Hamlin School District without the permission of that person. Two states have already banned students from having cell phones in school. While we do not know what will happen in South Dakota, we wanted to have a process in place that will allow our students to continue to have phones while maintaining respect for them.

Another change for this year is the requirement of semester exams. All students, grades 6-12, will be required to take semester exams. The semester exams will be held the last two days of each semester, and a semester test schedule will be posted on the school website. Students will have the opportunity to opt out of semester exams if they meet the following criteria.

- A student must have a grade of C (73%) or higher
- A student may not have been absent more than 4 times for the class period
- A student must be in good standing with the school

If a student meets all the criteria above, they will have the option to not take the semester exams at the end of the current semester. I believe that this will help our students learn responsibility and accountability as well as help curb behaviors while at school.

Finally, we are excited about the new addition scheduled to open this year! We have given tours to all the high school students, and they seem to be excited about the classes that will be offered. Right now, we feel we will be fully open by the start of the second semester. Hamlin CTE will give our students access to state-of-the-art classrooms and industry standard equipment. It is an exciting time, and the hardest part is the wait! I am looking forward to another great school year. If you have any questions, you can reach me via phone at 605-783-3644 or by email at [Jeff.Sheehan@k12.sd.us](mailto:Jeff.Sheehan@k12.sd.us).

Yours in Education,

Jeff Sheehan  
MS/HS Principal