



# Brookings School District

Working Together...Educating with Excellence...Inspiring Learners for Life

## BROOKINGS HIGH SCHOOL

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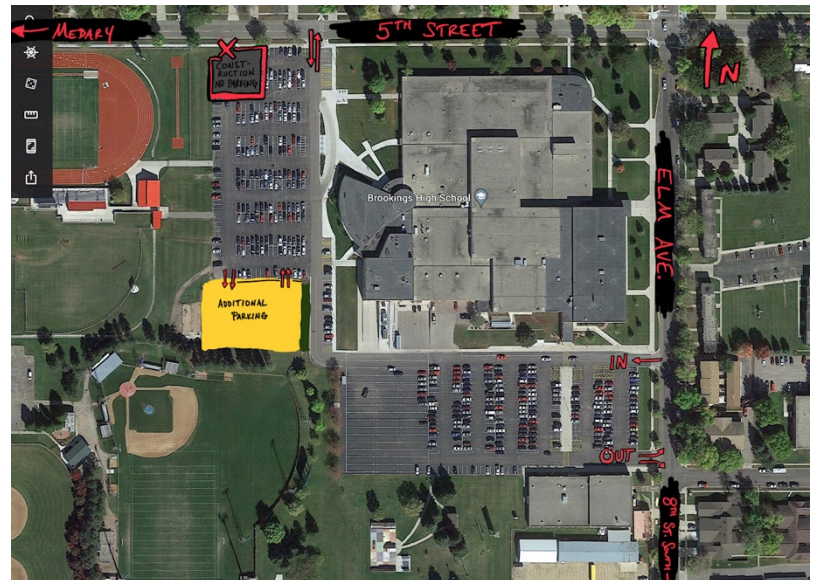
## High School Administrative Report

September, 2021

### CONSTRUCTION ZONE: WEST PARKING LOT

Progress continues despite the time of year or state of COVID in the world. Working with our Director of Transportation, Nate Loehr, we decided to move forward with the improvement of the BHS West Parking Lot. As you might be able to make out in the image on the right, the west entrance of our west parking lot is being renovated and will be out of commission for a period of about 10 days.

I was able to send information to our students and their parents and guardians about the change—and they must have read it! While this has affected our traffic flow, the first morning of construction went very well. Thanks to you, BHS commuters, for your patience and understanding.



### BEDC & BSD CTE

Over the summer the Brookings Economic Development Director, Andrew Sloss, reached out to begin a conversation related to workplace safety. Initially, we discussed manufacturers' needs for their potential employees to be more aware of "Lock-Out Tag-Out" procedures. However, in a later meeting with multiple manufacturers and industry representatives, we opened the scope a bit wider to include general safety as our topic.

Since then, Abby Page, BHS Career and Technical Education Coordinator, and I met with our teachers of CTE to share their safety curriculum and approaches to its instruction. Depending on the career pathways covered by the courses, teachers use different safety curricula to better understand and practice industry standards. For example, multiple instructors in our CTE department use OSHA as their safety curriculum—and in the Agriculture Career Cluster, students are able to earn industry-recognized OSHA certificates.

This is an excellent opportunity to make sure we are using industry-standard safety procedures in our classrooms whenever possible. It may also be a chance to drive changes to our curriculum and/or

instructional strategies based on this closer interaction with business and industry partners in the Brookings Community. I anticipate there will be a press release in the near future. Keep your eyes open (and your safety goggles on!)

### **2021-22 STAFFING: CHALLENGING, BUT ULTIMATELY SUCCESSFUL**

As we know, hiring quality staff members is the key to a successful school experience for our students. Multiple open teaching positions became opportunities for flexible problem-solving this summer. We're excited to have Grace Korthals filling our .7 FTE Social Studies position. Grace was most recently employed in the Milwaukee, WI School District and was teaching English to students with diverse backgrounds, many of whom were refugees. Mike Gerhardt, who has subbed for us in the past, is filling in for Kale Skogen in the Building Trades courses while Kale is deployed with the National Guard this year.

Our opening for a Debate teacher and coach was once again very difficult to fill. And again this year Sally Pies came to the rescue and agreed to teach the class and lead our award-winning co-curricular Debate program. Sally will be teaching the Debate courses this year, but not the speech courses. We found Katie Jacobs, a recent Augustana graduate, who will be instructing students in our Speech classes while serving as assistant Debate coach and learning the ropes in the debate world.

Additionally, multiple teaching assistant roles were vacant this summer, though I believe as we hit mid-september, all these vacancies will be filled. During my 25 years in education, I'm definitely seeing a trend of increasing difficulty finding staff to fill important roles in the building. Despite the challenges, I hope our potential educators know how rewarding a career working with students can be.

Thanks for reading.

Dr. Paul E. von Fischer  
Brookings High School Principal