

By Jan Rahn Managing Editor

The doors of Perkins County Schools open Monday, Aug. 17 to greet faculty, students and staff who will notice some attractive improvements that took place over the summer.

Classes start at 8 a.m. for students across the district and dismiss at 1:30 on beginning day.

For the rest of the school year, regular start and dismiss times vary slightly between high school and the lower grades.

There is one new teacher who has joined the district, English instructor Camilla Bekius.

Regular School Hours

- Elementary K-5: Morning start time is 8:05 a.m. Dismissal is at 3:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday, with early dismissal on Friday at 2:30 p.m.
- Middle School 6-8: Students begin at 8:05 a.m. and dismiss at 3:15 p.m., except on Fridays when dismissal is one hour earlier at 2:15 p.m.
- High School 9-12: Classes start at 8 a.m., with dismissal at 3:32 p.m. On Fridays, school gets out at 2:31 p.m.

Lunch Prices

Prices for student and adult lunches remain what they have been for the last several years.

Lunch prices across the district are: Grades K-5 \$2. Grades 6-12 \$2.50. Adults \$3.

There is a 25-cent charge for extra milk but no charge for second helpings.

Lunch accounts must be paid in advance for all grades.

New Instructor

Camilla Bekius replaces Danielle Helzer as English, journalism and yearbook instructor for the 2009-10 term.



“My goal as a teacher is to teach my students the skills they need to succeed in life after high school,” said Bekius, “whether they move on to attend college or move directly into the professional world.”

Her interest in the realm of literature and the fact she was born in Brazil, attended college in the U.S., and student taught in the Philippines proves her love for travel and desire to absorb all she can from other world cultures that can be passed along to her students.

“I like nothing more than to sit down and read a book, especially if I can do it swinging in a hammock—probably my Brazilian side coming out a little bit there,” said Bekius.” She enjoys visiting historic sites and art museums.

The native Brazilian has dual citizenship. She was born in Porto Velho and attended a boarding school located on the Amazon River during high school. She came to the U.S. to attend

Northwestern College in Iowa, graduating last December with a BA in English literature and a secondary education endorsement after completing her student teaching.

Bekius student taught at an international school in the Philippines geared specifically towards the children of missionaries. She fits into that category, as her parents are missionaries for Wycliffe Bible Translators in Brazil.

“I love to travel and the opportunity to teach at an international school was too exciting to pass up,” she said.

Her student teaching at Faith Academy was on the outskirts of Manila, Philippines during the fall semester of 2008.

“I chose to teach there because I attended a missionary boarding school myself growing up, and felt that I would have a connection and impact on the missionary kids attending Faith Academy,” she said.

Bekius got engaged the day before she moved to Grant. She said she is enjoying everything the community has to offer.

“I look forward to my first year as a teacher and hope to learn as much from my students as I seek to teach them,” she said.

Building Changes/Updates

School board members and administration met Monday night to tour the three building sites—elementary in Grant, middle school in Madrid, high school in Grant—and view the improvements made during the summer.

Changes or updates include:

Elementary: New tile in hallway of fourth and fifth grade classroom, window replacement where needed, new carpet in a couple of classrooms and the teacher lounge/workroom, concrete for ADA accessibility to playground and to repair parking space drainage issue.

Middle School: New paint in hallways and lunchroom, new carpet in main hallways and stairwells, exterior mortar and paint where needed, new concrete walkway and play area.

High School: Lighting upgrade throughout, new gym roof, ADA concrete walkways, mortar repair on old portion of building.

According to Superintendent Tobin Buchanan, most of the concrete work was paid for by stimulus funds to improve accessibility for disabled students and patrons. The rest of the projects were budgeted for out of the 2008-09 fiscal budget under Site Improvement and the Depreciation Fund.

The projects totaled over \$250,000.

“The focus of the projects was improving efficiency, correcting and avoiding current and future moisture issues, and improving learning and working environments,” said Buchanan.

PE/Sports

- Swimming: During the first two weeks of school, students in physical education classes K-12 participate in swimming at the Grant City Park pool.
- Fall Sports: Practice will begin Monday for football, volleyball, cross country and girls golf.

The first competitions are set during the first week of September.

Sept. 1: Girls varsity golf at Bayard.

Sept. 3: Girls varsity golf at Sidney. Boys/girls cross country at Goodland. Volleyball at North Platte St. Pat's.

Sept. 4: Football at Dundy County.

Activity passes for home events are available.