



WEST SALEM MIDDLE SCHOOL

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*In the midst of winter, I found there was,
within me, an invincible summer.*
-Albert Camus-



Dear Families,

Welcome back! I hope you and your children had the opportunity to spend quality time with family, friends and loved ones during the time away from school. It's important to take advantage of these moments so we can rejuvenate, refocus, and approach the new year with a renewed sense of purpose.

We ended the month of December with a community outreach activity. Our annual Christmas Basket Food Drive, held in conjunction with the West Salem Lions Club, was a huge success. Due to the commitment and generosity of students, families, staff, and community members, we were able to help over 70 of our neighbors before the holidays. Well Done Panthers!

I wanted to take a moment to share a few cold weather FYIs as they relate to school. Any cancellations of after school programs or co-curricular activities or events will be placed on our school website as soon as the decision to cancel them has been made. If you think something may be canceled due to inclement weather, please be sure to check the website. On most winter days, students will continue to go outside for recess. This is an opportunity for our middle schoolers to get outside to move, play, and get some fresh air. We encourage and remind students to dress for the weather!

As we make our way through the winter months, let's take advantage of this time and make sure our students continue to approach each school day with purpose. While staying warm may be a seasonal focus right now, it's important to remember that hard work, learning, and achievement develop the invincible summer that our students can carry with them through every season.

Warmly,

Ben Wopat
Principal
Twitter.com/coachwopat

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FROM THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Attendance Reporting

Each day we are in school, it is very important for us to have the most up-to-date attendance for our students. There are several ways to report absences for illness, appointments, vacations, etc:

- **We highly encourage you to report any absences, appointments, vacations by 8:00 a.m. each day.** Even if your child was sick the day before and will be out again, we still need to hear from you. If you are not in contact us, we then have to call each family that has not reported their child's absence, which can become very time-consuming.
- **While we understand that appointments are sometimes forgotten,** advanced notification allows us to have your child ready for pickup in a timely manner.
- **You can call 608-786-2090, Option 2,** and leave a message at any time of the day or night. You can leave all absence messages on this voicemail. You can even leave information that is scheduled weeks to months in advance. We keep a yearly spreadsheet with all absences that are reported to us.
- **You can email the Attendance Secretary, Stephanie Pearson, at pearson.stephanie@wsalem.wi.k12.us.** She will be able to update your child's attendance in Skyward and call you back if there are any questions.
- **Final reminder....**if your child has an appointment with a medical professional, please try your best to get a doctor's note so that we can verify the time away from school. Students are allotted 10 absences per year, and these doctor's notes are used so that appointments are not counted in the 10-day total.

Our goal is to work side-by-side with families to ensure that all students are safe and accounted for each day!



"Meet Us in the Middle"



Counselors' Corner
Ms. Becker - Mr. Lang



We certainly ended another year on a very positive and supportive note. In conjunction with the West Salem Lions Club, we once again helped to assemble boxes of food/paper products for area families! What a tremendous example of people (kids and adults alike) caring for other people. Panther Pride at its best! A huge "thank you" to everyone who helped support this community service project. We were able to assemble over 70 boxes of food for members of our community. Thank you so much!!

In late December, our 8th grade students spent an afternoon exploring careers at Western Technical College. 60 different careers were represented, giving our students a variety of options to learn more about. This is always a great event, and we appreciate this opportunity for our students.

Everyone is leading busy and hectic lives, yet be sure to take the time for people and events that are truly important in life. This will undoubtedly reinforce positive identity in our young adults by increasing their self-esteem and providing them with a sense of purpose! Wishing you a joyous and prosperous new year all throughout the year!

Early Release Dates 2024

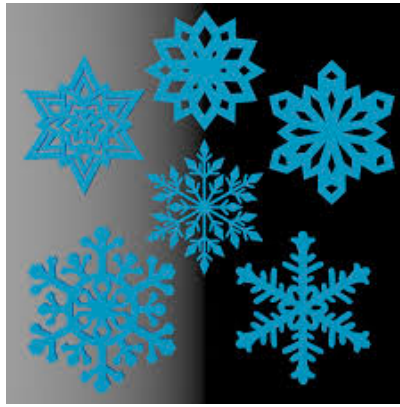
Wednesdays - Release at 12:20
Buses leave at 12:30

February 7
May 8



"Meet Us in the Middle"





6th Grade Winter Concert
Tuesday, January 16 at 7:00 p.m.
Marie W. Heider Center for the Arts

Students will need to arrive at the Heider Center, in
concert uniform,
no later than 6:30 p.m.

At the conclusion of the concert, all students will have
a tear-down responsibility before being excused.



"Meet Us in the Middle"



STUDENT OF THE MONTH

Each month, teachers send nominations for Student of the Month. December's focus was ACTING RESPECTFULLY. Below is a list of three students from each grade level that were chosen because they embody ACTING RESPECTFULLY. Mr. Wopat and Ms. Beld notified parents of this accomplishment, and met with them on December 19 for individual and group photos.

Grade 5

*Owen Christianson
Aubrey Lee
Elliot Wessel*

Grade 6

*Kylie Nelson
Sage Sagmo
Logan Tomten*

Grade 7

*Brock Brenengen
Brynn Loging
Aubriennah Smith*

Grade 8

*Candace Drury
Jesse Jothen
Lily Muellenberg*

*CONGRATULATIONS for making a difference in lives of others!
We appreciate YOU!*



"Meet Us in the Middle"



Calendar of Events-School

January 16	Grade 6 Choir/Band Concert @ The Heider Center (Report at 6:30, Choir goes first at 7:00)
January 19	End of 2nd Quarter
January 22	NO SCHOOL - Teacher In-Service
January 25	Grade 7 to School Forest (1/2 of class)
January 26	Grade 7 to School Forest (1/2 of class)
Jan 31-Feb 2	Grade 5 to School Forest (more details to come)

Calendar of Events-Athletics

Girls' Basketball (7th Grade)

January 11	4:15 vs. G-E-T MS @ West Salem ES
January 16	4:15 vs. Logan MS @ Logan MS
January 18	4:00 vs. Winona MS @ West Salem ES
January 22	4:15 vs. Westby MS @ West Salem ES
January 25	4:15 vs. Holmen MS @ Holmen MS
January 30	4:00 vs. Aquinas @ West Salem ES
February 1	4:00 vs. Tomah MS @ West Salem ES
February 8	4:15 vs. Sparta Meadowview MS @ Sparta Meadowview MS
February 13	4:00 vs. Onalaska MS @ West Salem ES
February 15	4:15 vs. Longfellow MS @ Longfellow MS

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"Meet Us in the Middle"





JANUARY

5th Grade Update

Math:

Students will be reviewing fraction operations and start working on dividing with fractions and whole numbers. The biggest focus will be on problem solving and understanding what is really happening as they multiply and divide fractions. After the unit we will be doing a project adjusting traditional recipes using multiplication and division.

Reading:

Students will continue to focus on nonfiction reading and comprehension skills. Some classes will be wrapping up finding the main idea and supporting details. They will be working on summarizing to find the theme. They will have the option to read graphic novels.

Writing:

Students will be creating their own graphic novel that has a theme in the story. Students will write the story and illustrate the pictures. Kids will be participating in classroom spelling bees.

Science:

Students will continue to learn about space. This month we're focusing on the solar system. As part of this unit, students will complete a project about a space-related topic. The majority of the project will be completed during science class.

D.A.R.E:

Students will continue having weekly D.A.R.E. lessons with Deputy Cody. This will eventually lead to a reflection paper and visual project.



Social Studies:

Colonial America is up next in history. Students will learn about the villages, schools, people, and laws associated with this time period. We'll map the 13 colonies before moving to the US state/capital maps.

-5th Grade Teachers:

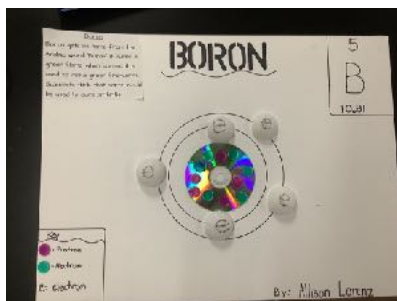
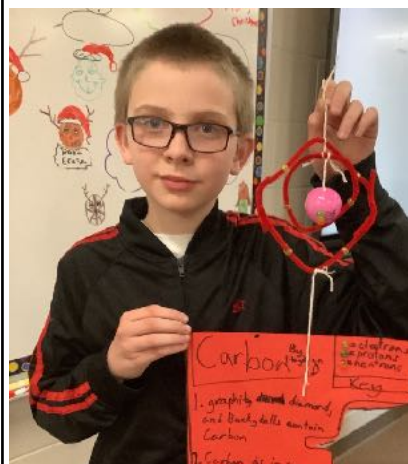
Mrs. Burdick, Mrs. Fink, Mrs. Kjos, Miss Folkers, Mr. Ringlien, and Miss Schrader





Science - Mrs. Jarosh

Students have been demonstrating their knowledge by building and drawing atoms and molecules. After the break we will be hands on with chemical reactions!



Regular Math with Mrs. Alo and Mrs. Jehn

Students will complete the second half of Chapter 5 in January which works on algebraic expressions and properties. At the end of this chapter they will be able to write and evaluate algebraic expressions using the commutative, associative, and distributive properties.

Before the end of the month students will begin Chapter 6 titled Equations. They will learn to write, solve, and graph one-variable equations and inequalities using the four basic operations. They will also work with writing and graphing two-variables equations.

Advanced Math with Mrs. Jehn

In January students will complete Chapter 8 - Integers, Number Lines, and the Coordinate Plane. Understanding positive and negative integers typically is easy for students because they have grown up in Wisconsin. Later when they extend their thinking to use the basic math operations with positive and negative integers this concept becomes a little more difficult. In the second half of the chapter students will recall skills they learned to write and solve equations and apply those to writing and solving inequalities.

We will also work in Chapter 9 in January learning about statistical measures including mean, median, and mode as well as quartiles, interquartiles, range, mean absolute deviation. The concepts of measures of variation and mean absolute deviation will be new to students and may bring back fond memories of a statistics course you might have taken years ago. These are difficult topics and very abstract for 6th grade minds.



"Meet Us in the Middle"





Mrs. Buisman - Language Arts

Happy New Year! With the beginning of 2024, we are starting a new unit in writing. Students will begin their opinion/argument unit in January. Students will practice using a variety of topics to research and make a claim that shows their opinion. Students will then back up their claims with factual evidence. We will have 2 larger papers during this unit. The first will be about whether chocolate milk should be allowed in school and the other will be a choice between 3 other school related topics.

Mrs. Schultz - Reading

In January, we revisit our word work with prefixes and suffixes, as well as continuing our novel study. Towards the end of January we will begin the 6th grade unit on Social Issues. During this unit students will learn about discrimination, social issues, and read one or more novels dealing with race relations in the mid-1900s. The unit begins with mini-investigations on important events, groups and people of the Civil Rights Era. We will look critically at some of the actions and opinions of people during the Civil Rights Movement and those in the novels, revisiting and connecting with the types of conflicts we explored in *Touching Spirit Bear*. Another aspect of this unit is to realize the diversity of human experience and see this period of our history through the eyes of the reporters and people who were living at the time, as well as the characters in our novels. Happy 2024!



Reading/ELA - Mrs. Rochester and Mrs. Friell

Agendas/Lessons: Work to be turned in for grade is posted on the Homework Hotline. The specific daily plan is posted in Google Classroom. If a student needs to miss school, please check GC for required work.

Writing and Language: Each class period, we practice working on sentences and/or parts of speech. In January we will work on compound sentences. We will also continue to review the four parts of speech we've reviewed so far (noun, verb, and adjectives). Word work will continue to include learning roots and spelling words. We have been working on paragraph structure and this month will focus on citing text evidence to support arguments.

Reading: Students have been reading self-selected books and argument articles about various topics. In January, they will read articles about social media and write an argument essay on this topic. They will be posted in GC.

Mr. Mahlum - Social Studies

In 7th grade Social Studies the students will continue to focus on the Bill of Rights. Students will look at the rights we as citizens have due to the first ten amendments to our Constitution. Towards the end of the month we will look at some of the other Amendments outside of the Bill of Rights that have given citizens more rights here in America.

Math 7- Mrs. Weber and Mrs. Piersma

Welcome Back and Happy New Year! We hope everyone had a wonderful break and holiday. As we return, we will be reviewing a few things on inequalities before the break and then finishing up that unit. We will also be taking our winter Fastbridge test as part of our district screener. Let's make it a great 2024.

Pre- Algebra- Mrs. Weber

Happy New Year to all of you. I hope everyone had a wonderful break and enjoyed the holidays. We will be continuing with the 8th grade book and unit on angles. We will be Fastbridge testing the week we return as part of the district screener. Let's make it a great 2024!

Science - Mr. Baker

Even though we are getting into the heart of the cell process unit, we made a switch to dissect deer hearts before winter break! After break we will finish up with some discussions on how cancer works in your body and then move on to genetics and why we are the way we are. We will be creating family pedigrees (like a family tree) making this a great time to talk to your kids about anything related to your family history.



"Meet Us in the Middle"



GRADE 8

newsletter

JANUARY EDITION

ELA- Mrs. Meyer & Ms. Sackett

To start the new year, we will hand out new books selected by the students to be read independently. These books will lead to researching some barriers faced by people in the reading. We will read these books each day, respond in our journals, and discuss the content with our Barriers Book Groups. In addition, we will spend time reviewing how to take good notes and how to find credible sources. We will use these skills as we begin to study what barriers exist and what steps have been taken to break down the barriers. Eventually, we will put the research together into a five-paragraph essay. Additionally, we will continue to practice writing a variety of sentence types and will incorporate them in our research papers.

Targets

Reading

- R.1 Make logical inferences from a text
- R.2 Cite textual evidence that strongly supports an analysis of a text
- R.3 Determine one or more central ideas and analyze their development over the course of the text
- R.4 Provide an objective summary of a text
- R.5 Analyze how parts of a text reveal aspects of a character

Speaking

- S.2 Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats
- S.3 Evaluate the effectiveness of the presentation

Language / Writing

- L.1 Correctly write compound sentences
- L.2 Correctly write complex sentences
- L.4 Demonstrate appropriate use of the conventions of standardized English grammar and usage when writing or speaking
- W.1 Write a clear claim/thesis
- W.3 Clearly introduce an examined topic by beginning with a hook, including background information, and finishing with the claim/thesis statement
- W.4 Develop a topic with relevant facts and details
- W.5 Write a conclusion that provides closure and ties up loose ends
- W.7 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are authentic to task, purpose, and audience
- W.6 Create writing that utilized effective transitions
- W.8 Gather credible relevant information from multiple sources
- W.9 Quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism.



ALGEBRA- Mrs. Coe

We wrapped up Unit 5 on Solving Systems of Linear Equations. We will expand our knowledge of functions and sequences and begin Unit 6 on Exponential Functions and Sequences in January.

The learning targets for Unit 6:

- 6.1: Write equivalent expressions involving powers.
- 6.2: Write and evaluate an n th root of a number.
- 6.3: SGraph and write exponential functions.
- 6.4: Write and graph exp. growth and decay functions.
- 6.5: Solve exponential equations.
- 6.6: Identify, extend, and graph geometric sequences.
- 6.7: Write terms of recursively defined sequences and write recursive rules for sequences.

MATH 8- Mrs. Coe & Mrs. Snook

We finished up Unit 4 Graphing and Writing Linear Equations just before Winter Break. During January, we will be investigating Systems of Linear Equations (Unit 5).

Regular Math (Unit 5)

The learning targets for Unit 5:

- 5.1: Understand how to solve systems of linear equations by graphing
- 5.2: Understand how to solve systems of linear equations by substitution.
- 5.3: Understand how to solve systems of linear equations by elimination.
- 5.4: Solve systems with different numbers of solutions.



SCIENCE- Ms. Smith- Waller

Happy New Year! We have been learning about Plate Tectonics and this month we will finish up a group project. For this project, groups will research a topic supporting Plate Tectonic Theory and then present their work to the rest of the class. We will conclude that unit with an assessment. After our assessment we will be moving on to focus on Earth's history and Geologic Time. We will learn to determine the relative age of rocks and how to match layers of rock from different locations. Then we will complete an activity to demonstrate how radioactive decay of elements is used to find the absolute age of rocks. To round out this unit, we will learn about fossils and look more closely at the eras of Earth's history as well as the significant events that help us organize our history into the geologic time scale. As a unit project students will create a timeline of Earth's history using a predetermined scale. After finishing up our unit on Earth History, we will finish up the year learning about Astronomy.

Essential Learning Outcomes:

- Analyze and interpret data to provide evidence for phenomena.
 - MS-ESS2-3: Analyze and interpret data on the distribution of fossils and rocks, continental shapes, and seafloor structures to provide evidence of the past plate motions.
- Construct a scientific explanation based on valid and reliable evidence obtained from sources and the assumption that theories and laws that describe nature operate today as they did in the past and will continue to do so in the future.
 - MS-ESS1-4: Construct a scientific explanation based on evidence from rock strata for how the geologic time scale is used to organize Earth's 4.6-billion-year-old history

SOCIAL STUDIES- Ms. Morgan

The start of 2024 finds our 8th-grade social studies students wrapping up their study of the American Revolution. Our next destination is the challenging years faced by the new republic as we moved toward effectively governing ourselves. We will do a short review of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and government structure before looking at the early presidents.

Our learning targets will include:

- 8.FE.1: Critique the effectiveness of the Articles of Confederation and the U.S. Constitution
- 8.FE.2: Summarize the roles and powers of each of the three branches of the government and the requirements for anyone involved in each.
- 8.FE.3: Explain the challenges that the new nation faced following the American Revolution
- 8.FE.4 Interpret the role of important individuals and events leading to the result of the American Revolution
- 8.FE.5: Assess Washington's and Adams' contributions to the creation of the presidency



ART



Grade 5

Welcome to MS grade 5 families! This trimester, Mrs. Kjos and Mrs. Burdick's classes are attending art. We began the trimester working on an abstract painting of our names. After that they have been working on a variety of portraits. A painting of an animal that represents them in personality was first focus followed by a pop art portrait. Later this month, portraits will turn to a more realistic style where we will look at facial features and proportions.

Grade 6

6th grade continues to work on some mini-works in various styles. Our first task was creating a portfolio for storage. Students will fill this portfolio with completed works by the end of the trimester. Our first large scale project guided a review of material use by creating a portrait sampler. Students will then move on to some artist research and will create an informational poster as well as a parody.

Grade 7

7th graders will spend the month experimenting with drawing from different points of view. One of the projects will require students to create the entire drawing from start to finish by observing an inanimate object of their choice. We will also be working to complete our unit focusing on one point perspective.

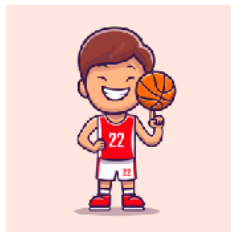
Grade 8

Students in 8th grade continue to work on projects that represent themselves this trimester. Our first project was a design that will be considered for this year's class t-shirt. They then created a medallion or a coat of arms to tell the story of them. Now we will move on to practicing Acrylic Paint techniques. 8th graders will also begin to design their wall block as a lasting way to represent their 8th grade self.

8th Grade Elective

Art Elective students are finishing up their acrylic painting work as we begin the trimester. After that we will move to liquid watercolor techniques and use the clay palettes that they created during the 1st trimester. If time allows, we will move on to various drawing techniques and media at the end of January.

HEALTHY LIVING



We will be moving into net/wall activities. Activities may include nitroball, pickleball, badminton, and crossnet pickleball, depending on the grade level. Please continue to remind students to have athletic their footwear for their Healthy Living days!





Panther Time & Spanish with Señor Hinman

5th & 6th Grade Panther Time

In 5th and 6th grade PT, we learned greetings and farewells along with the Spanish alphabet. We will be finishing up the rotation learning numbers 0-100. As with the other two units, we will be playing lots of learning games to help assimilate their Spanish vocabulary.

7th & 8th Grade Panther Time

In 7th and 8th grade PT, we have been watching YouTube videos and having subsequent discussions about the various cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. We started with Spain and from there, we explored the cultural aspects of Mexico, as well as some of the other hispanic nations of Central and South America and the Caribbean.

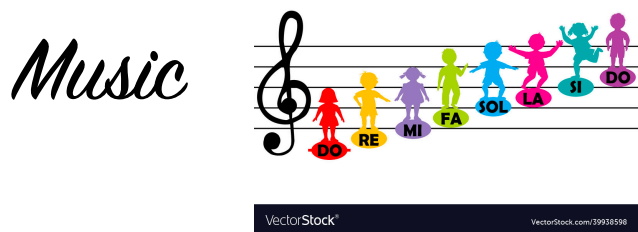
7th Grade Spanish

In December, we learned some expressions with greetings and farewells, along with some Christmas vocabulary. We even sang Deck the Halls in Spanish! In January, we're getting back into the swing of things with some more story-telling. Again, these stories have a humorous twist to them and contain words which we can also act out.

8th Grade Spanish

In 8th grade Spanish, we are still working on completing the curriculum work from the high school's Spanish 1 classes. It's coming along, but we still have a long way to go. In December and the beginning of January, we worked on a unit which mostly talked about the Panama Canal along with some information about Tish Hinojosa and her famous song, El Reloj. We will next be starting our 4th unit, La universidad, which generates students' interests in future endeavors while in the target language.





5th Grade General Music: Students are continuing their study of folk songs. We have now taken to the sea! We learned some sea shanties called "Haul Away Joe" and "Who is the Captain Now" and we even worked together to pull a rope in a circle! We have also learned the song called "The Wellerman" which isn't technically a sea shanty (see if your 5th graders knows why!). We have graduated from rhythm cups and have started bucket drumming to the song "Old Time Rock n Roll." Ms. Schraders & Folker's class are doing an amazing job performing rhythms on their buckets!

6th Grade Keyboards and More: All 6th grade Keyboards and more students recorded themselves playing "Jingle Bells" and it was sent home in a digital holiday card. I hope you enjoyed those performances! We are taking a short break from keyboards and are exploring video game music. We learned how primitive it was WAY BACK in the 1970s! Then students created their own music to go along with a video game scene of their own creation. Students were very excited for this project, be sure to ask your child to see their Google Slides!

7th Grade Guitars and Musicals: Throughout November and December, students started using their left hand on the guitar in first position. They are reading both standard notation and TAB. Students learn how to play "Jingle Bells" by reading TAB. Then they recorded themselves and these videos were sent using a digital holiday card. I hope you enjoyed those performances! Now we are taking a look at our next musical, "The Greatest Showman" which deals with acceptance and hard work.

8th Grade Keyboards and More Part 2: Students finished up their Dr. Seuss raps and seemed to really enjoy putting those together! Then throughout the month of December, we learned a bit about The Beatles. They read a short book about the history of The Beatles and explored the elements of music through Beatles songs. They are finishing up the unit by playing "Twist and Shout" and "Here Comes the Sun" on the piano keyboard.



WEST SALEM

ASL - Floor Hockey



Family Night



Our School Breakfast Rocks!

Our school breakfasts are nutritious and delicious!

School breakfasts provide students with the fuel they need to do their best in school. The meals always include fruits, whole grains, and dairy. For more information on our school nutrition program, go to our school district website and click on the fork and knife icon in the upper right corner. Menus can be found at wsalem.nutrislice.com or on the Nutrislice App.

HARVEST OF THE MONTH NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2024



Beets are The Harvest of the Month!

Add beets to your favorite family meals:

- Add grated raw beets to salad.
- Mix cooked beets into mashed potatoes for a pop of color.
- Add raw or leftover cooked beets to canned vegetable beef soup and simmer until tender.

Make meals and memories together. It's a lesson kids will use for life.

Select – Choose beets with firm, smooth skins and crisp leaves. Smaller beets are more tender.

Store – Remove greens leaving about 1 inch of stem. Store beets in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

Prepare – Rinse beets under cool running water and scrub with a vegetable brush. Beets can be eaten raw or cooked. You can eat the beet greens too!

Did you know?

Most of the beets grown in Wisconsin are red beets, but there are also pink, purple, white, and yellow beets. Try a rainbow of beet colors!



Nutritious, Delicious, Wisconsin!
#WIHarvestoftheMonth

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Recipe of the month

Root Vegetable Gratin

Serves 8

Ingredients:

- 1 Tbsp softened butter
- 1-2 sweet potatoes
- 3 medium beets
- 3 parsnips
- 14 Tbsp milk, divided
- 5 oz grated parmesan cheese, divided
- 1 Tbsp fresh thyme (or 1 tsp dried)
- 1 clove garlic, minced (or 1/2 tsp powder)
- Salt and Pepper to taste

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400°, grease a 3-quart baking dish with softened butter. Peel vegetables and thinly slice and transfer each vegetable to its own bowl. Pour 4 T milk onto potatoes and parsnips, and 2 T onto beets. Add 1/2 oz cheese, thyme, and salt and pepper to each bowl. Toss each bowl until all slices are well coated. Pour remaining milk, parmesan, thyme, and garlic into bowl and mix well, pour into bottom of baking dish. Layer and arrange vegetable slices neatly in the baking dish, pouring any remaining liquid in bowls over the top. Season with salt, pepper and remaining 1 oz parmesan. Cover with foil and bake for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake an additional 15-20 minutes until edges and cheese are lightly browned and vegetables are fork tender.

Per serving: 153 calories, 6g fat, 8g protein, 18.4g carbohydrate, 3.3g fiber, 211mg sodium

Source: laxf2s.org



LA CROSSE COUNTY
Health Department
Nationally Accredited

