



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 also 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 FYI's as they relate to school. Any cancellations of afterschool 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. Please be sure to check the website if you think something may be canceled due to inclement weather. On most winter days students will continue to go outside for recess. This is an opportunity for our middle school students to get outside, move, play, and get some fresh air. We encourage & remind students to dress for the weather when they go outside.

As 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

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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 at msoffice@wsalem.k12.wi.us.** The office 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 - Ms. Broughton



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. Thank you so much!! Also a huge thank you to the Dahl Dealerships who generously donated dozens of bags of food for families. This community continues to help in ways beyond measure and we are so grateful!

Our 8th grade students spent an afternoon exploring careers at Western Technical College in late December. 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 2025

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

February 5
May 7



"Meet Us in the Middle"





6th Grade Winter Concert
Tuesday, January 14 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, as a school we focus on one of our PAW expectations (Practice Kindness, Act Respectfully, Work Hard). The focus for December was Practice Kindness with a focus on being considerate of others. Below is a list of students from each grade level that were chosen for practicing kindness and being considerate of others. Parents were notified of this accomplishment, and Mr. Wopat and Ms. Beld met with the students on December 20 to share the great news with them.

Grade 5

*Jordan Girard
Lenora Schnick
Evalyn Hammes*

Grade 6

*Kelsey Krause
Jase Peterson
Lorelei Wessel*

Grade 7

*Jordyn Baures
Emma Field
Deacon Meyers*

Grade 8

*Kyleigh Davidson
Maelory Johnson
Tanner Moore*

CONGRATULATIONS! *We are so proud of YOU!*



“Meet Us in the Middle”



Calendar of Events-School

January 14 Grade 6 Choir/Band Concert @ The Heider Center
(Report at 6:30, Choir goes first at 7:00)

January 20 NO SCHOOL - Teacher In-Service

January 24 Mid Trimester

Calendar of Events-Athletics

Girls' Basketball (7th & 8th Grade)

January 14 4:00 @ Logan Middle

January 16 4:15 vs. vs Winona - 7th gr only - no 8th gr game

January 21 4:15 vs. Westby Middle - 8th grade followed by 7th grade

January 23 4:00 @ Holmen Middle

January 28 4:00 vs. Aquinas Middle - 7th grade followed by 8th grade

January 30 4:15 vs. Tomah Middle @ **West Salem ES** 8th grade followed by 7th grade

February 6 4:00 @. Sparta Meadowview

February 10 4:00 @ Longfellow Middle

February 11 4:00 vs. Onalaska MS @ **West Salem ES** - 8th grade followed by 7th grade

February 18 4:30 vs. G-E-T Middle

**all HOME games at WSMS unless noted



"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 start working on summarizing to find the theme. They will also have the option to read graphic novels and use them to find themes.

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 map the 13 colonies and discuss the importance of each region before moving to the US state/ capital maps.



-5th Grade Teachers:
Mrs. Fink, Mrs. Kjos, Miss Folkers, Mr. Ringlien, and Miss Schrader, Mrs. Fantz

6th Grade News!

January 2025



Reading– Mrs. Schultz

In January we revisit our word work with prefixes and suffixes, as well as a new 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 2025!

English- Mrs. Buisman

Happy New Year! With the new year, 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.

2

Math- 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- Mrs. Jehn

In January students will complete the second half of Chapter 8- Integers, Number Lines, and the Coordinate Plane. They will need to recall skills they learned to write and solve equations in Chapter 6 and apply those to writing and solving inequalities.

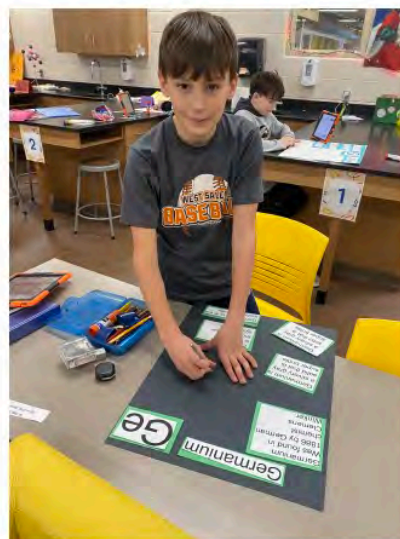
We will also work in Chapter 9 in January learning about statistical measures including mean, median, and mode as well as quartiles, interquartiles, range, mean absolute deviation. The concepts of measures of variation and mean absolute deviation will be new to students and may bring back fond memories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

Science- Mrs. Jarosh

Happy New Year! Thank you to so many families for helping support your child with the atom/molecule project. I love trying new things, and this year we made shrinky-dink atom ornaments! Science will be kicking off 2025 with an exciting unit involving chemical reactions. Students will have many hands-on experiences to



help them determine if a chemical reaction has taken place. A fan favorite is the reaction between a 9V battery and steel wool. This one we make sure to conduct outdoors!



Social Studies- Mrs. Jeranek

Throughout January we will explore the Civilization of Ancient Greece. Our focus will center around geography, economy, social status, governments, religious beliefs, and achievements. Students will compare Athenian and Spartan life, understand events of the Trojan War, and study the Ancient Greek Olympics. We will even participate in our own 6th grade olympics!

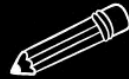
Reminders:

- Students need headphones at school every
- Students need to bring a charged iPad to school each day.
- Gum is not allowed in 6th grade.
- If students are absent, they need to check Google Classroom and Homework Hotline and get themselves caught up.



7th Grade January Newsletter

ELA



Ms. Friell and Mrs. Rochester

Class Supplies: All students are required to have their binder and composition notebook. Both are left in the classroom to ensure they are never lost and are easily accessible. In addition, students should bring headphones and an independent book to class each day.

Lessons: Work to be turned in for a grade is posted on the homework hotline. 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. Word Work also includes learning roots and spelling words. Student have been reviewing and learning strategies to write paragraphs and summaries. We will be continuing our argument unit.

Reading: During January, we will be reading Refugee. This novel follows three separate characters as refugees of world events. Students will be expected to read at school. Students will be assessed on reading and writing learning targets as they read the novel.

Dates to Know



Jan. 2- School Resumes

Jan. 8-11 - Trees for Tomorrow

Jan. 20- No School/Inservice



Tips/Helpful Links

PLEASE CHARGE YOUR IPAD EVERY NIGHT

[HOMEWORK HOTLINE](#)

Math

Mrs. Piersma and Mrs. Weber



We hope you have a wonderful and restful break and come back ready to learn!

Pre-Algebra

Mrs. Weber



We hope you have a wonderful and restful break and come back ready to learn!

Science Mr. Baker

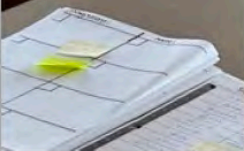


Even though we are getting into the heart of the genetics unit, we made a switch to dissect deer hearts before winter break! With that out of the way, we will be spending the next few weeks looking into our genes and why we are the way we are. We will be creating family pedigrees (like a family tree) making this a great time to talk to your kids about anything related to your family history.

Social Studies Mr. Mahlum



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.



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 learning about effective research strategies, and reviewing how to take good notes. 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.

January 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.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
- .2 Correctly write complex sentences
- L.4 Demonstrate appropriate use of the conventions of standardized English grammar and usage when writing or speaking

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) - Mrs. Coe and Mrs. Snook

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

I want to express my gratitude to all of the 8th grade students who shared their condolences over the last few months, my family and I greatly appreciate it. I also want to thank Mrs. Gunderson, who stepped in for me on such short notice, she was amazing! While I was gone, Mrs. Gunderson taught all about how the Earth, moon and sun interact to see phases of the moon, solar and lunar eclipses, and seasons. December was spent learning about some other topics related to Astronomy including gravity and how it holds our universe together. We also learned about other objects we find in our solar system and their scale proportions. January will wrap up our Astronomy unit with a Choice Board project where students will show their understanding of all of the topics they learned. That will lead us into Geology for the remainder of the year. We will begin by learning about processes that change the surface of the Earth: weathering, erosion, and deposition.

SOCIAL STUDIES- Ms. Morgan

At the start of 2025, our 8th-grade social studies students will explore the aftermath of the American Revolution, focusing on the challenges faced by the new republic as it worked to establish an effective government. We'll begin with a brief review of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the structure of the U.S. government, before examining the early presidencies. Additionally, students will begin research for their "Unheard Voices" podcast, which they will record in the spring. Along with the research process, we will focus on strategies for identifying reliable sources and distinguishing quality materials from those that should be avoided.

Our learning targets for this unit 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 government and the requirements for individuals involved in each branch.
- 8.FE.3: Explain the challenges faced by the new nation following the American Revolution.
- 8.FE.4: Assess Washington's and Adams' contributions to the creation of the presidency.
- 8.FE.5: Explain the important rights included in the Bill of Rights and why they were included in the document.

Please remember if your student is participating in the end of the year trip to DC (or you are participating as a chaperone), your second payment is due Jan. 9th. For students this payment is \$370 minus their profit from the individual candle sale fundraisers and for chaperones the total due is \$426.

January 2025

Art News

Art Elective Watercolor Tray and Paintings



ART ELECTIVE
Acrylic and Mixed Media

6TH GRADE PANTHER TIME
Fused Plastic, sewing and recycled material design and construction.

AFTER SCHOOL ART
Found Object Sculptures, hand sewing, wood sculptures etc. Check Google Classroom for more up to date options

GRADE 5

Color Wheels and Fantasy Maps

GRADE 6

Elements Books and Famous Artist Research

GRADE 7

Drawing from different points of view

Grade 8

Elements and Principles and Color Mixing

6th Grade Panther Time



CLEANED OVER BREAK?

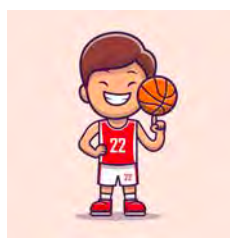
THE ART ROOM COULD USE THE FOLLOWING:

- BROWN PAPER BAGS
- USED DISH STRAINERS
- USED HAND TOWELS
- LEFT-OVER YARN, STRING THREAD
- GLUE GUNS (USED)
- CARDBOARD TUBES
- CEREAL BOXES



Thanks to Mr. Shrake for the ornament help!

HEALTHY LIVING



We hope that everyone had a great winter break and were able to be physically active while they were away from school. To start the year, we will be continuing our net/wall activities in all grades but also working on more health-related topics in class. We want to remind our students to continue to bring athletic shoes for class.

Spanish



Panther Time & Spanish with Señor Hinman

5th & 6th Grade Panther Time

In December, we learned some Christmas vocabulary. In 5th grade we also started going over greetings and farewells which we will continue into January along with the numbers 1-100. For 6th grade, we also started going over days of the week and months of the year which we will continue into January along with time-telling. As with other 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 European nations. We started with Western Europe and in January we should be getting into Eastern Europe as well.

7th Grade Spanish

In December, we learned some Christmas vocabulary and finished up a story. We also did a mini unit on some basic grammar. In January we'll get back into the swing of things with some more story-telling as well as try out reading a short novel.

8th Grade Spanish

In December, we finished up a story, and even did some Christmas caroling. We are still working on material to satisfy the requirements for the high school's Spanish 1 class.

NOTE: Looking ahead to February, Spanish classes will be having a fiesta on February 13th & 14th (depending on A and B days). The last fiesta was awesome so keep up the good work!



"Meet Us in the Middle"



STEM NEWS

January 2025

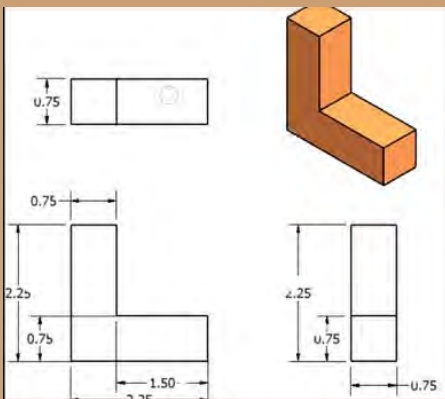
6TH GRADE

STUDENTS IN 6TH GRADE ARE CURRENTLY LEARNING ABOUT THE ENGINEERING DESIGN PROCESS. THE STUDENTS ARE USING THE ENGINEERING DESIGN PROCESS TO DEVELOP AN ANKLEFOOT ORTHOSIS FOR A CHILD IN NEED OUT OF RECYCLED MATERIALS. AFTER SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING THIS CHALLENGE THE STUDENTS WILL PRESENT THEIR RESULTS TO THE CLASS.



7TH GRADE

STUDENTS IN 7TH GRADE ARE EXPERIENCING SOME "TECHNICAL DRAWINGS" WHICH CHALLENGES THEM TO DRAW FROM THREE PERSPECTIVES. THE STUDENTS ARE LEARNING HOW TO MULTI-VIEW SKETCH OBJECTS, MEASURE THEM TO THE NEAREST 1/16 OF AN INCH, AND DIMENSION THE DRAWINGS ON PAPER. THESE ISOMETRIC AND ORTHOGRAPHIC DRAWINGS WILL HELP AS WE WORK WITH A PROGRAM CALLED TINKERCAD TO GENERATE 3D MODELS ON THE COMPUTER. SOON WE WILL BE USING OUR KNOWLEDGE OF SKETCHING TO CREATE OUR OWN PUZZLE CUBES TO TAKE HOME.



8TH GRADE

In 8th grade STEM the students are designing and building their own cardboard pinball machine.



ROBOTICS

In Robotics the students have learned about gear ratios, speed vs. torque, and a variety of different types of gears. They are now using their knowledge to build a robot dragster!

happy holidays from ETC



All Classes will have a measurement test when they return from break. They all have study guides and testing materials posted on their google classrooms

PCA

The students have been developing their own business and products to sell this past month



7th and 8th Grade have been getting certified on the machines with safety and instructional lessons. Some 8th Graders have elected to make Tree Ornaments for their safety tests



All 7th and 8th Graders need Safety Glasses for ETC. We have a used bin for students but they are not in the best shape

ASL FLOOR HOCKEY GAME SCHEDULE

| | | |
|------|------|---------------------------------|
| 1/14 | 4:15 | VS LOGAN |
| 1/21 | 4:15 | AT CENTRAL |
| 1/23 | 4:15 | AT ONALASKA |
| 1/30 | 4:15 | VS HOLMEN |
| 2/4 | 4:00 | AT LOGAN |
| 2/6 | 4:15 | VS CENTRAL *FAMILY NIGHT* |
| 2/11 | 4:15 | VS BRF *NON CONFERENCE GAME* |
| 2/13 | 4:15 | VS ONALASKA |
| 2/20 | 4:15 | AT HOLMEN |



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 [here](#)

**HARVEST OF THE MONTH
NEWSLETTER
JANUARY 2025**





**CRUNCH
into
CARROTS**

Carrots are the Harvest of the Month!

Add carrots to your favorite family meals:

- Add shredded carrots to salads, slaw, or sandwiches.
- Roast carrots and serve as veggie fries.
- Bake with carrots! Add shredded or cooked and mashed carrots to muffins, cakes, and cookies.

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


Select – Choose smooth and firm carrots with a deep color and fresh, green tops.

Store – Remove green tops and refrigerate in a plastic bag for up to 2 weeks.



Prepare – Scrub under running water to remove dirt. Peel if desired.

Did you know?

Carrots come in a rainbow of colors including purple, yellow, white, red, and orange. All carrots have many nutrients, but each color contains different phytochemicals. Phytochemicals act as antioxidants in our body and protect our cells from damage.



Nutritious, Delicious, Wisconsin!
#WIHarvestofTheMonth

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP. The University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension is an EEO/AA institution committed to diversity among its employees and in its programs.

Recipe of the month

Carrot Fries

10 Servings 1/2 cup

Ingredients:

- 2 Pounds carrots
- 2 teaspoons oil
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 2 dashes black pepper

Flavor Variations (choose one)

- Add 2 dashes ginger
- Add 2 dashes oregano, dried, 2 dashes garlic, granulated
- Add 1 dash cumin, 1 dash chipotle powder, 1 dash chili powder
- Add 2 teaspoons lemon juice, 1/2 teaspoon fresh parsley

Directions:

1. Wash hands.
2. Preheat oven to 425 degrees.
3. Line baking sheet with parchment paper.
4. Wash carrots well, remove dirt, trim, peel and cut into uniform size.
5. Place carrots in a bowl.
6. Add Salt, Pepper and Spices to oil, drizzle over carrots and toss to coat.
7. Place carrots on the baking sheet.
8. Bake for 20-25 minutes turning halfway or until fries are golden brown and crispy.

Per serving: 30 calories, 1 g fat, 0 g protein, 6 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 80 mg sodium

Source: laxf2s.org



Coulee Region Farm to School is a partnership between UW-Madison Division of Extension, LaCrosse County Health Department, Mayo Clinic Health System—Franciscan Healthcare, Gunderson Health System, and the School Districts of Bangor, LaCrescent-Hokah, Holmen, LaCrosse, Onalaska, and West Salem.