

USD 376 Sterling sets the bar high for academic and athletic achievement

By RYAN CARLSON
USD 376 is an institution dedicated to providing excellent education and preparing today's youth to be the leaders of tomorrow. The school has undergone several major projects over the past few years. The first was a bond issue passed in 2008. That bond was worth more than \$20 million and set the stage for a new school building, a large modern grade school with all of the amenities one would expect for a 21st century educational institution. Sterling High School/Junior High also saw great benefits from the bond passing. In 2012 a fully functional, technologically advanced theater was opened at the complex. It has the capability of sitting 400 individuals. Over it's six year history the theater has played host to a variety of events including Broadway quality plays such as Big River, the Rice County spelling bee, as well as various concerts and

musical programs. The grade school is located at 218 South 5th. The high school and junior high have two separate entrances. The high school entrance is located at 412 North Fifth Street and the Junior High entrance is at 308 East Washington. The district possesses leaders who are as dedicated to education as they are ensuring the public's money is adequately allocated. Each administrator is well educated for the position in which they hold. The Grade School Principal is Brenan Riffel. Riffel has served in that capacity for 13 years, but has served as a school administrator in USD 376 for 15. Sterling High School's principal is Dr. Bill Anderson. Anderson has served as the principal of Sterling High School for nine years. But has been in school administration for a total of 10 years. Prior to that he was with the Nickerson school district for nine years.

USD 376's superintendent is Dr. Fred Dierksen. Dierksen has 35 years of experience in education and started his career in administration in 1997 as Sterling Grade School's principal. Dierksen graduated from Sterling College in 1982 and holds post graduate degrees from Fort Hays State University and Wichita State University. The district is well known for it's academic achievement. Though Standard of Excellence awards are no longer given out, they do show a legacy of excellent quality of education for Sterling's students. From 2002 until the awards were ended in 2012 USD 376's schools earned some sort of achievement award every academic year. From scores in reading, to writing and science the test results are proof positive that the USD 376 system is a shining example of scholastic achievement. In 2016 the school moved to a 3A designation and class sizes indicate they should be

in the 3A range for years to come. The district continues to increase in student population, with Principal Riffel reporting four more students enrolled at Sterling Grade School in September of 2016 bringing the total school population up to 267. The high school has

155 students and the junior high has 77 students. Sterling Grade school continued increasing the academic offering to it's student body with new social studies tech books. This school year the school district has continued its tradition of academic excellence.

Sterling placed third during a state 3-2-1A tournament held in Lyons. On top of that, three of the Sterling High School debate teams earned individual places. That same weekend, the school placed second at a state scholar's bowl held in Inman.



After a one-week delay in the 3-2-1A State Debate in Lyons, the SHS Debate team competed well and brought home a third place trophy. To go along with the overall third place trophy, three of the SHS debate teams earned individual places. JJ Oden and Edward Weiner took third place in the 2-Speaker category while the teams of William Weiner and Sierra Emery, as well as Maddie Thrasher and Jacob Pieplow, earned fourth place. SHS wants to express their pride in these students for representing the school and community so well. The teams are coached Mrs. Wagley and Mrs. Dutton.

USD 376
STERLING, KS 67579
STERLING GRADE SCHOOL ENCOURAGING LIFE-LONG LEARNERS

“WORK HARD, BE NICE”

MAKING
PROGRESS...
STERLING HIGH SCHOOL
AND JR. HIGHTOP FLIGHT FACILITIES
AND A TOP FLIGHT STUDENT BODY

TOWARD THE FUTURE.