

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

By RYAN CARLSON
 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 its 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 years. 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 Jim Goracke. Goracke

graduated from Newman University with a bachelor's degree in education. He received his district level certification at Pittsburg State University. This is his first school year as superintendent of USD 376. The district is well known for its 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 rules are proof positive that the USD 376 system is a shining example of scholastic achievement. The district continues

to increase in student population, with Principal Riffel reporting four more students enrolled at Sterling Grade School in September of 2017 bringing the total school population up to 271 from 267 last year. The high school has 158 students and the junior high has 71 students. Sterling Grade school continued increasing the academic offering to its student body with new social studies tech books. This school year the school district has continued its tradition of academic excellence. Sterling placed third in both 2 speaker and 4 speaker debate at the 3-2-1A state debate tournament held in Coffeyville. 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.



USD 376

STERLING, KS 67579

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