

Henry C. Ahrnsbrak, Ph.D.
1998 Friend of Education

Dr. Henry C. Ahrnsbrak taught in the Beaver Dam District and then served as principal of the High School from 1933 to 1945. The nomination credits Dr. Ahrnsbrak with contributions to Beaver Dam education that impact the district even now, fifty-five years later. He was very influential in establishing the district's strong vocational/technical department. He emphasized the importance of the effort grade, in addition to the achievement grade, on report cards. He established Faculty Honors to expand recognition of students' achievements beyond the academic. Ahrnsbrak also associated the Beaver Dam High School staff with the UW-Madison to implement a progressive guidance program for Beaver Dam students.

Ahrnsbrak left Beaver Dam to pursue his doctoral studies at the UW-Madison. He continued his work in education at the UW Extension Marathon County Center in Wausau, which now has a memorial room in his honor. As a final indicator of Ahrnsbrak's loyalty to Beaver Dam, he endowed the Mildred Elser Ahrnsbrak Scholarship in his wife's memory, to be awarded to a BDHS graduate each year. The nominator notes that "Dr. Ahrnsbrak's heart never completely left Beaver Dam." The Ahrnsbraks further proved their love of Beaver Dam by choosing a Beaver Dam cemetery for their burial.