

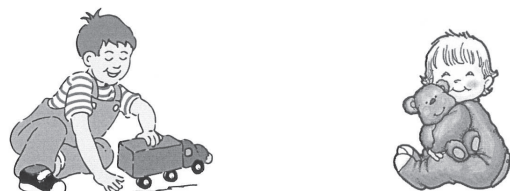
**The Fort Calhoun Schools Offices will be closed December 31st-January 1st for the New Year's holiday.**

## WELCOME TO FORT CALHOUN

Our community is growing and we want to be prepared. We are continuously counting students in our District to determine future needs.

**Residents:** Please help us with our child count by reporting your children up to 18 years old, especially those who intend to be enrolled in Fort Calhoun Schools for next school year. If you have not already notified us through the census or there has been a change in your household, call the District office at 402-468-5591 with your information.

Fort Calhoun Community Schools use an automated calling system to notify families of emergencies or weather-related closings. Make sure all your contact numbers are up-to-date by calling your child's respective schools.



# FREE

**Early Childhood Developmental  
Screening  
For District Residents  
Birth to 5 years**

**Areas Screened Include:** Communication,  
Social, Self-Help, Fine & Gross Motor

**Where:** Fort Calhoun Elementary  
**When:** Friday, January 18th  
9:00-Noon

**For more information or to make an  
appointment call:**  
Joyce Smith  
(402) 468-5714

## DIGITAL RECORD BOARDS



The District has expanded its digital records capabilities and now the new system will be set up with Athletics and Alumni Activities. We are currently busy working on accumulating and entering data. One of its features is digital copies of all our yearbooks so we are looking to borrow books from alumni

The books will be scanned and then returned to the lender, but the digital copy will be available for folks to peruse and enjoy for years to come. Please include your name, phone number and return address so we know where to return them.

If you or a family member have one/some to lend please do so. You may drop off your books at the high school. If you have questions contact Patty, Rose, Nick Wernhoff, or David Genoways at 402-468-5591.

Thank you.

## OPTION ENROLLMENT

Option enrollment is an area not always clear to patrons and the Nebraska Legislature believes that parents/guardians have the primary responsibility of ensuring their children receive the best education they believe is available. Nebraska is a choice state meaning that any resident K-12 student has the option to attend any public school district in the state, including outside their resident district.

School boards retain their educational setting and enrollment by adopting standards through policy including program capacity limits, class size, grade level caps or building capacities based on available staff, facilities, projected enrollment of resident students and availability of programs. The Option Enrollment policy is reviewed each year based on these items and the parameters set. The goal is to optimize our capacity without overfilling which has proven more difficult with the greater numbers of resident students in resident households. For this reason, the board has also passed policy with specific steps that new families must take in order to be considered a resident family prior to enrolling students in the schools.

School districts do receive resources through the State Aid formula for option students based on net enrollment (in vs out). For 2018-19 this resulted in well over \$1 million for Fort Calhoun Community Schools.

Let us know if you have any questions. The enrollment period is open now through 3/15/19



# The Fort Dispatch

Volume 28 No 5

Fort Calhoun Community Schools

January 2019

## FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

### School Safety: A Federal Perspective and (Where we Stand)

I hope this letter finds you recovering from the Holidays but still enjoying the company of family and friends. In this newsletter I want share with you a summary federal report produced by our school lawyers regarding a report from the Federal Commission On School Safety. This commission was established by President Trump to make meaningful and actionable recommendations of best practices to keep our students safe. Over the course of the next several months I will list some of their recommendations and then inform you of the programming already in place here at the "FORT" to help assure you that we are working hard and smart to keep the FORT as safe a place as we possibly can. Here are the first two highlights and recommendations included within the report:

- **Providing character education and a positive school climate so that students feel connected to, rather than isolated from, teachers and fellow students, and also helps combat cyber bullying.**

The Fort Calhoun Community Schools work hard to be sure all students have a staff advocate for all kids through our homeroom programs both at the elementary and secondary buildings. Character education is taught throughout a student's career here through social skills training at the elementary and then through living skills and PEP class at the secondary. The district is also working on implementing a new program K-12 using the Formative Five research that will help embed the five positive character traits: Empathy, Self-Control, Integrity, Embracing Diversity, and Grit across all grade levels. The district will also work to promote involvement in school activities for all students, as this will help students feel even a greater sense of belonging and reduce the possibility of isolation.

- **Improving access to school-based mental health and counseling services and integrating mental health, substance misuse, and other supportive services into schools.**

Our district has undertaken an aggressive Mental Health campaign for the 2018-19 school year and beyond. The Board of Education began working on this issue in the 2017-18 school year when they contracted with Arbor Family Services to provide off-site counseling services. For the 2018-19 school year the board elected to bring those counseling services on-site on a weekly basis. This new on-site service gives students access to licensed mental health counselors without having to travel to the Omaha offices. The district is also in the process of having all staff certified in Mental Health First Aid. This training helps staff to recognize and help students who are struggling with possible mental health issues. The district staff is also in the process of aligning and infusing mental health education throughout the K-12 curriculum. The last leg of our mental Health program will be aligning all the supportive services for students and families in the area of Mental Health. This report is the first of four in which I will inform you considering Safety and Security in our district. This is an area of great importance to the Board and to the whole district, as our students' safety is our number one concern. Have a great start to the New Year!

Good Luck and God Bless!

Dr. Donald P. Johnson  
Superintendent of Schools



Mr. Jerry Green  
Secondary Principal

FIRST SEMESTER’S TOP TEN

Where did it go, first semester went by so fast. Time really does fly when you are having fun; I do truly love what I get to do. I have put together a top ten list, mostly of people who have been instrumental in our first semester success.

- 10. Parent Support – Very important to the success of the school and students.
- 9. Maintenance and Custodial Staff - Inside and out of the building they get it done.
- 8. Technology Coordinator and Transportation – Try and run a school day without these people.
- 7. School Nurse – Pre K-12 position, over 700 students and staff. Wow!
- 6. Food Service Director and Cooks – Feeding over 700 students and staff daily.
- 5. Teachers/Specialist/Staff - Teaching, educating, and much more.
- 4. Christmas Break - We all need it.
- 3. Administrative Team – Working together to do the very best for everyone.
- 2. Secretaries and Office Personnel - They do it all.
- 1. Students - The reason I became a teacher and stay in this crazy business.

“The dream begins, most of the time, with a teacher who believes in you, who tugs and pushes and leads you on to the next plateau, sometimes poking you with a sharp stick called truth.”--Dan Rather

Abraham Lincoln once said, “The best thing about the future is that it comes one day at a time.”

I agree; enjoy the moments and time we get to spend together.

NEW YEARS  
HAPPENINGS

- 1/1/19-1/7/19 Christmas Break-No School
- 1/7 Staff Inservice
- 1/8 School Resumes
- 1/14 School Board Meeting
- 1/16 Booster Club Meeting

Nick Wemhoff  
Assistant Principal, AD

I have spent a lot of time over the past few days thinking about a New Years Resolution. I of course think of all the possible things from how to be more helpful around the house to how can I go above and beyond to help other people to how to I take better care of myself as a person, both physically and mentally. As I look at all the possible things that I want to focus on for the 2019 school year, I kept coming back to one thing. Being more positive in my daily routine. I am going to work on being more positive about myself, what I am doing everyday, and being more positive to other people. I think that one thing that we can never get enough of is positive energy flowing through our buildings.

I challenge everyone to keep a positive attitude during the year 2019. I spent some time looking up ways to be more positive and here are some of the things that kept coming up: Don't Wait for Happiness, Clarify and Prioritize, Be Resilient, Self Pep Talk, Laugh Away and Smile, Seize the Day, Be an Optimist, Start Accepting and Stop Expecting, and Use Positive Language.

Even if you take one of these tips from above and use it, that will get you starting in a positive direction. I often hear people say that positive energy is contagious. Be one of those who are spreading positive energy this year. Hope you have a GREAT year in 2019!

Man is what he believes



**Taya Skelton** was selected as top female athlete by the Greater Omaha Sports Committee for Cross Country for this year.

**Tyler Strauss** was named to the *Omaha World Herald's* All Omaha Area Team - Honorable Mention and also to the *Lincoln Journal Star's* All State Class C-1 Honorable Mention for Football.

The Nebraska School Activities Association has released its Academic All State winners for Fall activities. Those from Fort Calhoun are: Softball - **Courtney Baxter** and **Julie Klemm**; Girls Cross Country - **Avery McKennan** and **Taya Skelton**; Boys Cross Country - **John McKennan**; Volleyball - **McKenna Greenwell** and **Rianna Wells**; Football - **Trenton Bouwman**; Play Production - **Grant Hansen** and **Taya Skelton**.

-Elementary News-

Your Principal: **Drew R. Wagner**

*Engaging + Learning + Achieving = Productive PIONEERS!*

As we turn toward the second part of the school year I am reminded on communication, encompassing a career ready concept, and gratitude. There were an enormous amount of activities that have occurred or involved us somehow. A few highlights from the end of November into December involved; Buzz Cuts for Reading, Caroling at Autumn Pointe, New State Assessment scores provided, Career Readiness Day, and the Winter Concert. Of course not in that order, however all activities that encompass Productive PIONEERS for the future. With that communication concept in mind let’s continue with doing this at a high level.

Our annual Reading Incentive program was a hit. The kids read a total of 161,850 minutes outside school hours during the six week period of our Books and Buzz Cuts reading incentive program. Myself and Mr. Teeter, 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, agreed to let kids give us a buzz cut and our counselor Marie Adams agreed to let them cut 5-6 inches off her hair if they reached their reading goals. Miss Hall's kindergarteners won the competition. They met their goal and I will tell you it has been chilly this month. Nice job students, staff and parents for assisting in this process.

Our 6<sup>th</sup> graders are a part of history. On December 14, we had a variety of professionals from a Civil Engineer to Entrepreneur present information on their career. This is part of our philosophy on career readiness and the states concept of career readiness. As students are more and more pressured to become productive citizens we feel it is our duty to expose students to a variety of career fields within the school. This is our first step toward that initiative. Big Thank you to our presenters: Matt Tinkham (Surveyor/Manager), Becky Tinkhamf (Loan Officer), Amy Infante (Business Owner/Entrepreneur), Chad Nourse (Manager/Computer Programmer), Sam Christensen (Landscape Architect), and Mainor Martinez (Civil Engineer). We are in the right direction. More to come soon.

As you can see there were a few other highlights that I did not go into detail, but highlight community base leadership and other 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills. Caroling at Autumn Pointe was a success! The winter concert was supported, as usual. All of this is successful because of our community. With that said, THANK YOU! I appreciate everyone’s support in our school. It only increases our collaboration and relationships to then impact our learning environment in a positive manner. Let’s take on this second part of the school year with a smile and a positive attitude. THANK YOU!

THANK YOU all for your continuous support of your child’s education and letting us assist!

Be thankful, stay positive, and encourage a growth mindset. Take care! Go PIONEERS!

Respectfully,  
Drew R. Wagner