

Fort Calhoun Community Schools  
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Fort Calhoun, Nebraska 68023

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Fort Calhoun Community Schools

January 2020

**FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT’S OFFICE**

**Happy New Year!!**

New Years is an exciting time of the year where we all reflect on the past year and anticipate the year to come. It’s a time of year for celebration and making New Year’s resolutions. Hope is alive and everything seems possible. It is my intention to use this letter to reflect on this past year and then outline my hopes for 2020.

2019 was a great year here at the “FORT”! The District Test Scores continued to improve and finished in the top 12% of the State. NICHE and National School Ranking company ranked the Fort Calhoun Community Schools 13th in the State of Nebraska. The District saw a growth in the student population and a lot of great community support. Our student-athletes also had a great year representing our community at some of the highest levels. The Marching Band received a superior at the State Band Marching contest and other clubs and activities also had good years.

The District has continued the process of committing to a 3 classroom per grade level strategy and has committed to a 4-classroom addition that will break ground in March. The strategy the Board adopted several years ago to increase revenue by leveraging student growth dollars through the Option Enrollment plan is working well. As Option openings have decreased we have seen an increase in families moving to our District. The increase in State Aid has allowed us to improve and expand facilities which in-turn has attracted more families to move into our school district.

2020 holds a ton of promise for our school district. The District will be building once again with the four-room addition that is scheduled to be completed prior to the start of the 2020-2021 school year. The Board and administration will have to plan for the remaining phases of the building process to complete long range plans. This last phase will have to address the recreation space and the Pre-school/Early Childhood program.

Last but certainly not least the Board of Education will pick my successor, as I will complete my career here on June 30th of 2020. My career has been a blessing to my family and me and it is my hope that the community will support the Superintendent in the same fashion they have supported me over the past 10 years. It is my hope and prayer that the Fort Calhoun Community Schools will thrive on for years to come and continue to be a leader in the education of Nebraska schools.

Good Luck and God Bless  
Dr. Johnson, Superintendent of Schools



**In conjunction with the superintendent search, Fort Calhoun Community Schools Board of Education will hold a community meeting on Friday January 10, 2020 at 5:30 PM in the Auxiliary Gym at the High School. See the enclosed letter for more information and how to submit input.**



**Zane Schwarz, Malachi King, Tyler Strauss, and Kaden Therkindsen** were named All Area Honorable Mention for Football by the Omaha World Herald. **Zane, Malachi, Tyler, and Kaden** were also Omaha World Herald All Nebraska Football Honorable Mention. Congratulations!!!

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln announced **Anita Saalfeld** and **Sara Wellman High Horse** were nominated among 900 other teachers throughout the world by 1st year students as “positively shaping the Huskers” high school experiences and preparing them for college”. Mrs. Saalfeld and Mrs. Wellman High Horse received letters from UNL’s Chancellor for this honor.

The **Boys Basketball Team** is the **Champion** of the Logan View/SS Holiday Tournament.

Fort Calhoun Community Schools have begun using a new automated calling system to communicate with families. This system will replace AlertNow previously used for emergencies or weather-related closings. Call your child’s respective schools with updated contact information and if you have questions.



**Early Childhood Development Screenings**  
**District Residents**

January 24, 2020 8:00 AM to 12 PM  
Contact the elementary school to register 402-468-5714

Mr. Jerry Green  
Secondary Principal

### THE #1 PREDICTOR AND FACTOR OF SUCCESS

By Jon Gordon

Angela Duckworth, professor at the University of Pennsylvania, identifies grit as the number-one predictor and factor of success. It's not talent, title, wealth, or appearance. It's grit, the ability to work hard for a long period of time towards a goal; to persevere, overcome, and keep moving forward in the face of adversity, failure, rejection, and obstacles. Success doesn't happen overnight. Along the way a leader and team will face countless challenges and will need Grit to find a way forward! And this begs the question. If Grit is so important and individuals and teams really need Grit, then what is it? And if Grit drives us, what drives Grit? I believe Grit is:

#### DRIVEN BY LOVE...

If you don't love it, you'll never be great at it. If you don't love it, you won't work to overcome all the challenges to keep doing it. If you love what you do, you won't quit when the world says you should. You will continue to show up every day, do the work, and discover that success created by the love you have inside you.

#### INSPIRED BY VISION AND PURPOSE...

If you have a vision for what you want and you know why you want it, you will work hard and persevere in order to achieve it. Your vision and purpose are greater than your circumstances and challenges. When you know your why and you know the way you won't let obstacles get in the way.

#### FUELED BY OPTIMISM AND BELIEF...

Research shows that when you believe in a brighter and better future you will continue to take the actions necessary to create it. It becomes a self fulfilling prophecy. What you believe determines what you create. If you believe it's possible, you will continue to work to make it happen.

#### POWERED BY FAITH AND HOPE...

There will be times when your failures and challenges bring you down. There will be moments you want to give up. It's during these discouraging times that you need more than positive thinking. You need faith and hope to keep you going. Faith keeps you focused on possibilities instead of problems. Hope keeps you moving towards the future instead of living in the past.

#### REVIVED BY RESILIENCE...

When you get knocked down your resilience will move you to get back up. You will keep fighting for what you love, what you believe in, what you hope for and what you want. Even when your dream is killed a thousand times, you will keep reviving it and try one more time.

#### KEPT ALIVE BY STUBBORNNESS...

You just won't give up. When your dream is revived, your stubbornness keeps it alive. You won't let your circumstances define you. You are determined to define your circumstances.

#### AND IF WE'RE HONEST INCLUDES SOME FEAR OF FAILURE AND DESIRE TO PROVE YOURSELF...

The fear of failure I'm talking about is not a paralyzing kind of fear but a healthy dose of fear that causes you to work harder and practice and prepare more. Combine this with a desire to prove yourself that you have what it takes; that you can do it and you'll keep working to improve in order to reach your goal. All the great ones, no matter how much success they have, still have a healthy dose of fear of failure and desire to prove oneself. It's what keeps you humble and keeps you working to be great.



### Happy New Year from PFE!



Here's a quick summary of 2019. There were 2 amazing art murals created by the entire elementary school, a record attendance at the Spring Carnival, and over 1,400 donuts served to students and their families. Hundreds of new books were purchased for the PreK through 6th classrooms, a Walk-a-Thon happened, and local businesses stepped up for the largest corporate sponsorship to date. A new Art program kicked off and sold out within days, and hundreds of desserts were donated and sold to raise money for PFE at the local fish fry. A record number of families signed up to be PFE members, along with a great showing of membership from FC teachers and staff. All of this and more made for an awesome year. Thanks to all who volunteered time, energy, and finances in 2019.

On to 2020! The first public meeting of the year will take place on January 20th, at 6:30pm in the High School Library. Everyone is welcome to attend the meeting. Important plans and ideas are discussed, and voting will take place. Attending PFE meetings is the very best way to be informed of what is happening, and share your input.

February is bringing two exciting new PFE created events. The elementary students should dust off their dancing shoes and get ready to have some fun at the Sweetheart Dance for Girls on February 7th, and The Sock Hop for Boys on February 28th. Watch for information being sent home in Thursday folders, and on the Facebook page(Pioneers for Education).

March kicks off with Dad's turn for donuts at the school on March 6th. PFE will be selling desserts at the Catholic Church's fish fry in March also.

Spring is always a very busy time at The Fort. PFE hosts many events during the Spring, and the glue holding those events together is the VOLUNTEERS. When you see PFE signups rolling out all Winter and Spring, please sign up. All are welcome to volunteer. Volunteering is a great opportunity to meet local families, and have a fun time while doing something great for all of the students!

To contact Pioneers for Education, please email us at [pioneersforeducation@gmail.com](mailto:pioneersforeducation@gmail.com)

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#### NON-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE – (Also refer to Board Policy 4001)

Fort Calhoun Community Schools does not discriminate on the basis of prohibited factors in employment and educational programs/activities. The School District affirmatively strives to provide equal opportunity for all. Additional School Board policies prohibit harassment and/or discrimination against students, employees, or patrons on the basis of sex, race, color, ethnic or national origin, religion, marital status, disability, age, pregnancy, and any other legally prohibited basis. Retaliation for engaging in a protected activity is also prohibited. Any person who believes she or he has been discriminated against, denied a benefit, or excluded from participation in any district education program or activity may file a complaint using the district's complaint procedures. Inquiries regarding compliance with any of the laws referred to in this policy may be directed to: Dr. Donald Johnson, who may be contacted in writing at 5876 County Road P43, PO Box 430, Fort Calhoun, NE 68023, at [djohnson@fcpioneers.org](mailto:djohnson@fcpioneers.org) by email or by telephone at (402) 468-5596 or to the district's Title IX and/or Section 504/ADA Coordinator.



If you are new to the area or have a change in your household please contact the school with your family's information. We use this information to keep you informed of the happenings in the District and to notify you of important information from the schools. We also publish the *Dispatch* monthly and mail it 4 times per year.

You may either call the school at 402-468-5591 with the information or go to our website [www.fortcalhounschoools.org](http://www.fortcalhounschoools.org), under School, Enrollment, fill out #4-Census Informaion and mail it to Box 430 Fort Calhoun, NE 68023 or fax it to 402-468-5593. Call if you have any questions.

**MR. NICK WEMHOFF**  
Assistant Principal/AD

I hope everyone has had a great winter break! It is a great time to be surrounded by your family and friends as you celebrate the holidays and the start of a new year. I know for myself, it is always an opportunity to relax and recharge as I get ready for the second half of the school year. I am excited to get students back in the building and get back into the swing of it!

I want to take a moment to recognize what we have been doing with our new weight lifting program and all of the work our coaches are doing. Coach Christensen came to me about a year ago and proposed a weight lifting program that would be available to all our athletes year round. Dr. Johnson and the administration were very supportive of this program from the beginning to help get it off and running.

We currently offer lifting three days a week, Monday-Wednesday-Friday, in the morning. It is open to all athletes both male and female. We have been averaging over 75 athletes each day! If you look at our athletes, you can see the physical difference it is making. They are truly becoming bigger, faster, and stronger. We are also starting to see that work pay off on the athletic playing field. Our athletes are jumping higher and are physically stronger.

This program has already started to make an impact and will have a long lasting affect on our athletes in years to come. As we train more athletes we are looking for it to translate into more victories in sports. Coach Christensen also reminds me constantly that not only are we improving our athletes; we are equipping them with skills that they can use the rest of their lives to stay physically fit. I want to thank all of our coaches who are up in the weight room with our athletes on a regular basis with a special shout out to Coach Christensen, Coach Humphrey, and Coach Thomas. Thanks for all that you do working with our athletes every day!

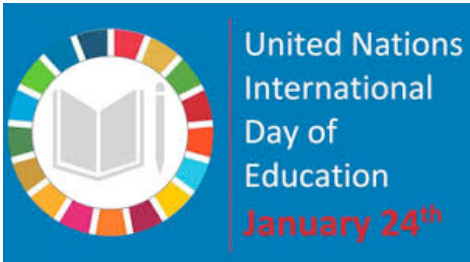
*“Things may come to those who wait, but only the things left by those who hustle.”*  
– Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States



Taylor Quik Pik, Fort Calhoun has begun a program where a portion of gas purchases on Pump #3 are being donated to the Fort Calhoun Booster Club. Please help us thank them by taking advantage of this opportunity.



1/1/20	HAPPY NEW YEAR!
1/7/20	School Resumes
1/9/20	FCYSO Youth Wrestling
1/12-13	Doane Honor Choir
1/13	School Board Meeting
1/15	Booster Club Meeting
1/16	FCYSO Youth Basketball
1/20	Martin Luther King Jr.
1/24-26	Band @ UNL Winter Winds
	Choir @ UNO Boch Festival
1/24	Early Childhood Development
	Screening @ Elementary
	UNO Middle School Honor Choir
1/27	1st Day of JH Girls Basketball
1/31	UNO Honor Band



The world will celebrate the International Day of Education on 24 January 2020, a day proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly to honor the role of education for peace, development and its centrality to human well-being.

**Elementary News**  
**Your Principal: Drew R. Wagner**  
**Engaging + Learning + Achieving = Productive PIONEERS!**

Hello from the elementary! As we close out the first part of the school year, I think about students being safe and did we provide them different opportunities to flourish. We entered this month with a plethora of activities from November. A few activities this month included mid-year testing, 6th Grade Career Readiness day, Health rescreens, Classroom celebrations, and much more. As we look toward 2020 I wanted to take some time to elaborate on our goals for this year. Here we go!

The first goal is to deploy and initiate a movement called Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports. I hope you have heard some buzz from your student on this initiative. Here are a few indicators that you may have heard about with PBIS. If you have heard about the “tickets” then you can answer yes. If you have heard about “Pioneer of the Day/Week” then you can answer yes. The school has been sending home information with updates on this process. Remember this program is designed to assist with our behavior goals by recognizing positive behavior with an incorporation of our behavior flowchart. The school is tracking this process through our committee meetings which are happening on a monthly basis. During these meetings we have an action plan that we have been following to ensure we are staying on the right track. We are taking this process at a slow and steady pace and are looking forward to the evolution of this program for the future. We are excited to have the students go through another round of “Expectation Stations” in January. This will be a nice reminder for students as we head into the second part of the school year. Please continue to ask your students about this movement. We are super excited to reinforce positive behavior and keep students safe! Remember our four behavior goals are: Safe, Brave, Respectful and Responsible.

Next, this goal was based on of results/feedback from all with emphasis on English Language Arts. Our main goal was to improve students’ growth by 10% based on a variety of assessments. At this time our students are on the right track. We are constantly looking at the data from assessments (E.g. NWEA, Dibels) to daily running records to track this progress. We also have a great partnership with our Educational Service Unit assisting us track this progress. Lastly, the tracking of this goal takes a lot of time and effort with the collaboration of the professionals. In that collaboration staff is having those specific conversations attending to those needs for each student. This is a big goal. This goal will continue into next school year based on of our results. Of course staff are receiving opportunities to further gain knowledge to assist students to make those appropriate gains. I can’t wait to see the next round of results.

In conclusion, this next part of the school year will go by fast. Please take time to enjoy your experience here. We continue to be a school that thrives to be excellent every year. We do this by building relationships, collaboration, communication, continual growth and of course with a positive outlook. Combine this with our District mission and it is evident we are laser focused to do what is best for students. Thank you for choosing Fort Calhoun. It is a great day to be a PIONEER! Go TEAM!

Happy New Year! Let the year 2020 be the best yet! Let positivity lead the way! Thank you!

Respectfully,

Drew R. Wagner  
Your PROUD Elementary Principal