



The **Fort Calhoun Pioneer Marching Band** was the First Place Winner in Omaha's Septemberfest Parade.

**Sophia Irvine, Bailey Donovan, and Kyle Deyen** were

selected as Winners/Participants by the Greater Omaha, Council Bluffs Area Council on Youth Leadership sponsored by the National Council on Youth Leadership.

Homecoming candidates for 2019 are **Maggie Theisen, Kennedy Bradburn, Kinsley Wimer, Westin Nottleman, Kaden Therkildsen, Tyler Strauss, Adam Bannister** and **Grant Halford**.

Coronation will take place at the afternoon pep rally on Friday 10/11/19.



## SKILLSUSA HOG ROAST

SkillsUSA will be hosting their annual Hog Roast on Homecoming night, October 11th. Members of the SkillsUSA club will be serving food in the High School Commons from 4:30 to 7:00. Tickets will be pre-sold by the SkillsUSA members, these sales help the students offset their cost of going to State, so if you know of a SkillsUSA member please support them. Pre-sale tickets for this year's event are \$9 for adults, \$8 for SkillsUSA/VICA Alumni, \$6 for children 12 and under. Tickets will also be available at the door, but if you wait to buy tickets at the door they will be \$10 for adults and \$9 for SkillsUSA/VICA Alumni. Donations are welcome.

**Thanks to all of the community members for your support.**

**For all the latest going on at  
"The Fort" visit our website at  
[www.fortcalhounschoools.org](http://www.fortcalhounschoools.org)**



# The Fort Dispatch

Volume 29 No 2

Fort Calhoun Community Schools

October 2019

## FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

### **"Working to Keep your Kids Safe"**

In a world where the only thing on the news is bad news, our District is working hard to keep our staff and our kids safe. This effort is driven by several different hard working committees with goal to keep your kids as safe as we can. In this article I am going to give you the description of some of those committees and their role in keeping you students safe.

#### **Threat Assessment Team**

The District Threat Assessment Team is comprised of our Superintendent, Building Principals, Special Education Director, and our School Resource Officer. The team is specially trained in the range of risks schools encounter, risk factors, and assigning levels of concern to observable and behavioral risk factors. The team values an open and safe school environment and focuses upon prevention and calculated responses to threatening situations. The interventions utilized by the Threat Assessment Team promote and emphasize dignity and respect. Ranges of threats posed to schools include bullying, cyber-bullying, a wider range of student mental health and behavioral issues, vandalism, bomb threats, threats/assaults towards teacher, staff, and students, school shootings, and other acts of violence.

#### **Crisis Team**

The District Crisis Team is comprised of multiple staff members including our Administrators, Teachers, School Resource Officer, School Counselors, School Psychologist, School Nurse, and other District staff members. The team consults with Arbor Family Counseling, local law enforcement, and other outside agencies as needed. The goal of the crisis team is to respond, mitigate, and recover following a school crisis. A school crisis is any traumatic event that seriously disrupts coping and problem-solving abilities of students and school staff. When a crisis occurs, the team is convened and the district's crisis response plan and guidelines are followed.

#### **Safety Team**

The District Safety Team is led by our Superintendent and School Resource Officer and is comprised of other Administrators, the Business Manager, Director of Maintenance, Director of Transportation, School Nurse, Teachers, other Staff Members, and a Community Representative. The goal of the team is to make school safety a priority and to ensure that a secure, orderly environment for learning is part of the daily school routine. All staff completes monthly safety trainings covering a variety of topics such as slips, trips, and falls, bullying, and conflict resolution. Each building undergoes a monthly building inspection by two staff members to assess for specific safety concerns. The District Safety Team meets quarterly to address a variety of issues related to safety preparation, current safety concerns, and other issues related to safety as they arise.

The hope is that the first two committees will not ever have to be used, but be assured that we prepared to use them if needed. We are also planning to add a tip reporting system to our website, within the next month. The system allows the school to receive unanimous tips regarding bullying, safety concerns and threats of violence 24/7.

Safety also starts at home. Be sure that you are monitoring your student's phone and internet usage. Be sure that the websites they are using are safe and age appropriate. Limit screen-time of any kind on a daily basis. Take time as a family to talk around the table to be sure that your kids are heard and supported. If parents and the School District work together we can provide our students a safe and loving environment.

Good Luck and God Bless

Dr. Johnson



\*PFE Welcomed teachers and staff back to their first week of school by delivering Scooters coffee to all staff while they readied their classrooms for students. Next up was a Back to School dinner which was very well attended. This is a great event where elementary staff members gather together to have a meal and conversation prior to greeting students that evening. Thank you to Kelli Shaner, for chairing both of these important events.

\*The first week of school, Summer Bridge book certificates were turned in. Dara Waters organized an ice cream social for the students who finished their books. Summer Bridge is a great program to keep students working and thinking over the long summer break.

\*The school Walk-A-Thon kicked off the last week of August, with donations being received through September 20th. Weekly tokens of appreciation were given to top earners. PFE and Washington County Bank paired up for a classroom coin drive in conjunction with weekly donations online and in person. The grand total received was just over \$13,000! September 20th was a beautiful day for the walk. The Pioneer Mascot joined us, and the students loved having him there. Thanks to the Walk team, and Michelle Dill for organizing the walk!

\*After months of planning, PFE was excited to announce the new Art After School program for 3rd through 6th grade students! The first session sold out in 24 hours and started early September. Students receive instruction and guidance from Mr High Horse and Mrs Rutledge, working on skill building and their take home project. The second session will begin in October. Watch for future information regarding registration for the 3rd and 4th sessions next spring. Many thanks to Michelle Dill, and Mr High Horse for creating this program!

\*PFE had the first meeting of the school year on September 16th. It was very well attended, with new and familiar faces. We were able to have a member vote on several important items. We appreciate, and encourage attendance at our every other month meetings. Our Membership Drive is still going, it's never too late to become a member of PFE! If you are interested in becoming a member, contact us at [pioneersforeducation@gmail.com](mailto:pioneersforeducation@gmail.com)

\*We would like to thank our many Corporate Sponsors, and record number of 2019/2020 Members. Orchestrating all of the great events we plan couldn't happen without all of you.

\*Next meeting: November 18th, 6:30p.m. at the High School.

Mr. Jerry Green  
Secondary Principal

**Homecoming Parade,  
Pep Rally and Coronation Change**

Fort Calhoun Community Schools’ Homecoming will be on October 11th. The parade route this year will be the same as the last several years. We will start at 15th and Monroe and move north up 15th Street to the school. The non-school participants will line up south of 15th and Monroe; this allows the school participants to come around the block and follow the band. School floats should line up in our south parking lot and will move down to 15th and Monroe to begin the parade. Students at the high school will be dismissed at 12:05 p.m. and the parade will start at 12:30 p.m. All students, community members and visitors are invited to attend the Pep Rally at the high school stadium immediately following the parade. All students will be dismissed from the high school at approximately 1:30 p.m. We are all looking forward to another exciting homecoming event.



**This year’s Homecoming Coronation will take place at the Pep Rally.** Traditionally the coronation takes place after the football game. The Pep Rally is our largest event of Homecoming week and

it seems fitting to announce our Homecoming Court and the Homecoming Royalty at this outstanding event.

**Pick Up/Drop Off Reminder**

All students should be dropped off in the west parking lot and enter through the front doors. That’s the easy part.

Picking up students has a few more details. Picking up students during the school day should always be done in the west parking lot as they exit the front doors from the office.

At the end of the school day **all students** who are being picked up will **exit the South Doors to the south parking lot**. This requires two very important pieces of information. 1. Please pull all the way up in the pickup lane so cars don’t get stacked up behind you. 2. If vehicles do get backed up PLEASE pull into the parking lot and park so vehicles are not stopped on Lincoln St. Students can easily walk out to your vehicle. We have had complaints about traffic being stopped on Lincoln St. There is plenty of room in the parking lot for all the vehicles.

I would like to thank you in advance for your help with this.

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

This is a reminder to athletes who are not out for a fall sport but are going to play a winter sport; you must have a sports physical before you can practice. Please make sure you take care of this before winter practices begin for HS on November 18th and for Junior High Boys basketball around October 28th. JRH Wrestling and JRH girls basketball will start after winter break.

The **Booster Club** is always looking for help in concessions, especially with Junior High and Reserve/JV games. If you are interested in helping out, please let me know. You can always sign up on the **Booster Club page** on the school website: <http://www.fortcalhounschoools.org/community-organizations/booster-club/>

Are you wondering where the sports schedules are? Remember all sports schedules are available online: <http://www.nebraskacapitolconference.org/g5-bin/client.cgi>. You can also sign up for reminder emails or notifications through this website. If you have questions, please feel free to

**SEASON**  
**ACTIVITY PASSES 2019-20\*\*\***  
**Prices remain the same as 2018-19**

Elementary Students K-6	\$20.00
Jr-Sr High 7-12	\$30.00
Each Adult	\$50.00
Family Pass (Immediate Family)	\$110.00

Individual Admission Prices – Varsity Home Contests  
\$4.00 Students K-12  
\$5.00 Adults

Individual Admission Prices – JV and Lower  
\$2.00 Students K-12  
\$3.00 Adults

Golden Age Conference Passes are available **FREE OF CHARGE** to any patron over 60 who requests one.

**\*\*\*FORT CALHOUN SEASON PASSES DO NOT INCLUDE ADMISSION TO ANY CONFERENCE, DISTRICT OR STATE CONTEST HELD AT FORT CALHOUN OR THAT FORT CALHOUN MIGHT HOST.**

**-Elementary News-**

Executive function is a set of skills that help your child make plans, control behavior, and set goals. Your child’s growing brain, as Harvard University’s Center on the Developing Child describes it, is like a busy airport, and executive function is its air-traffic control system. It allows a child to focus on an activity, remember details, and manage their time—all critical tasks for success in school.

The 7 essential executive function skills children need, according to researcher and author Ellen Galinsky, are:

- Focus and self-control
- Perspective taking
- Communicating
- Making connections
- Critical thinking
- Taking on challenges; and
- Self-directed, engaged learning.

Read on for answers to common questions about these skills. How can I tell if my child struggles with executive function? Since executive function involves a set of skills, there is no single test to identify executive function problems. Generally, a child may have executive function weakness if she or he has trouble:

- Planning projects and staying organized
- Telling stories verbally or in writing
- Retaining information while using it (remembering a phone number while dialing, for instance)
- Estimating how much time a task will take
- Memorizing and retrieving information from memory.

Are executive function problems a learning disability? No. But many people with learning disabilities tend to struggle with executive function. Individuals with ADHD, autism, or other behavioral disorders might have trouble with executive function, as well. If my child is struggling with executive function, what are my first steps to address it? Consider which skills seem to present the biggest problems for your child.

Contact your child’s teachers and principal to discuss how these issues may be impacting his or her school performance. Together, you can devise school and home-based strategies.

Is my sixth-grader too old to strengthen his or her executive function skills? No! Though a child begins to develop executive function skills in infancy, his or her brain continues to develop through adolescence and into adulthood. It is never too late to help your child develop skills and processes to support learning.

How can I reinforce good executive function skills at home? One of the simplest—and most fun!—is to play games. Simon Says, for instance, teaches learners to follow instructions; storytelling games boost communication; what-if and imaginative games challenge children to consider new perspectives; and memory games help children retrieve information.

How can I help my child complete schoolwork? Make a checklist for navigating assignments. For a child struggling with executive function skills, the steps necessary to complete a task might not be clear. Define them specifically. For instance: get out pencil and paper; put name on paper; read directions, etc. Encourage your child to write the due date at the top of each assignment as a visual reminder. At home, make a visual calendar with deadlines for projects.

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