

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.

Thank You!



PFE had a quiet December and January, getting ready for the busy months ahead as we start the last half of the school year! Where did the time go??

Upcoming events that were discussed at the January meeting are Donuts with Dad on Feb. 1st and Mornings with Mom on March 1st. Everyone seems to enjoy a sweet treat with their kiddos to start the day! Also, PFE Fish Fry Dessert night on March 22nd. Original Works will be starting soon, so be on the lookout for more info coming soon. The students all seemed to enjoy when the Artist in Residence came last year, so we're bringing her back February 4-8. We can't wait to see the finished product! We want to thank all those who have signed up to volunteer their time with this project.

Keep sending in those dried up, unwanted markers instead of just throwing them away....We have already sent in our first collection of over 600 markers for the Crayola Color Cycle Program.

****Our next meeting will be on March 12, 6:30 pm at the High School.
Happy New Year from the PFE



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.

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 where any resident K-12 student has the option to attend any public school district in the state, including outside their resident district.

School boards adopt 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 6

Fort Calhoun Community Schools

February 2019

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

“Déjà vu”

As I was preparing to write this letter I glanced back at the February letter from 2018 and honestly thought about just copying and pasting, change a few dates, and call it good. Most of the things I would write about are some of the same issues I was dealing with a year ago. The weatherman still is killing me when it comes to letting school out and just like last year I would rather be safe than sorry. I will continue to make decisions on keeping our kids off questionable roads and/or from freezing in outlandish cold conditions. Last year I batted .500 on these weather calls; this year I am batting about .250.

The other issue that is always a concern is setting the Option Enrollment limits, as they are required to be reviewed and set on an annual basis during the month of February. This always is a tough decision as we are in an area where we have to balance financial stability with class size. After the January board meeting, I met with the Finance Committee, the teachers, and will be meeting with the E&A committee on setting those numbers for the February meeting. We are considering lowering the lid for the Kindergarten class in an effort to slow down the rise in class sizes. The board looks at several different checkpoints before making this call.

The end of the Winter sports season is just weeks away and our student-athletes are gearing up for District play. Our kids are competing well so it should be a fun month. This time of the year is also Honor Band and Honor Choir time and the “FORT” had a good number of students participating in these various music honor opportunities. Good Luck to everyone in their upcoming events.

In closing I would encourage you to be sure your student is participating in at least 1 extra-curricular event. Research indicates that students who are involved in student activities not only are more well-rounded, but also score higher on standardized tests. Research also tells us that students who are involved in extra-curricular sports tend to be more engaged in their high school journey and learn skills that they can not generally be taught in the regular classroom.

Have a Great February and God Bless!

Dr. J.
Superintendent of Schools



Visit our website at
www.fortcalhounschoools.org

Mr. Jerry Green
Secondary Principal

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent Teacher Conferences will be held at the junior/senior high school on Wednesday, February 13th from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. Teachers will be taking a supper break from 5:00 to 5:45 p.m. Please enter the junior/senior high through the main west entrance and teachers will be set up in their classrooms. It is important that only one family be in the room at any given time to ensure privacy. We will have chairs set up outside the classrooms for you to sit and wait. We will also provide you with room maps so you can easily find your student's teachers.

I would encourage you to bring your student along to visit with the teachers. Grades 9-11 should be sure to stop by to visit with homeroom teachers to review and sign off on your student's four-year plan.

Please look for a Parent Teacher Conferences letter to arrive with more specific details.



FEBRUARY
HAPPENINGS

- 2/11 School Board Meeting
- 2/13 High School Parent Teacher Conferences
2-8 PM 1:30 PM Dismissal
- 2/13-14 Elementary Parent Teacher Conferences
2-8 PM 1:15 PM Dismissal
High School Dismissal 1:30 PM
- 2/15 Staff Inservice **No School**
- 2/20 Booster Club Meeting
- 2/25-28 Book Fair @ Elementary
- 2/26 Senior High School Band Concert
- 2/28 Jr-Sr High Choir Concert

Nick Wemhoff
Assistant Principal, AD

All of our school activities are published on the school website using the "RSchoolToday" website. This website offers a variety of functions that includes: printing of individual sport schedules, looking ahead on the calendar to future dates, and also email and text message reminders, alerts, etc. If you would like to sign up for alerts and reminders, you can do that directly through the website. On the top right of the calendar click the "notify me" link. Go through the steps and set up an account. If you have any questions, feel free to give me a call.

One of the awesome features this website offers, is a mobile app. The app is called activity scheduler. It is a free app. The logo for the download is a blue hat with "rST" written on it. You can download the app. You will have to set it up for our school and that is an easy process to do. When you set it up, select Nebraska for state, then Nebraska Capitol Conference, then Select Fort Calhoun. This app gives you a 1-week schedule. It will include whatever is on the school calendar from activities to lunch menu. You can also search schedules by individual sports. Again, if you have questions on it, feel free to give me a call.

Fort Calhoun Band students have broken a record for the number of participants selected for the Hastings Honor Band. Those selected are **Nate Bonacci, Kenzie Hansen, Jayden Hunter, Aaron Johnson, Savannah Lukasiewicz, Avery McKennan, John McKennan** and **Ryan Swierczek**. Congratulations!

Davan Goos and **Sophia Irvine** were selected for Hastings Honor Choir. **Bella Irvine** and **Ellie Collins** were selected for the UNO Middle School Honor Choir.

The Fort Calhoun Spelling Bee was held. Elementary winners are **Nick Kusek-Champion** and **Anna Taylor-Runner Up**; Junior High Winners are **Adriana Hernandez-Champion** and **Alayna Prunty-Runner Up**.



Happy Valentines
Day



The Fort Calhoun Booster Club supports all areas of Fort Calhoun Junior High and Senior High School athletics and there is still time for you and your family to join for the 2018-19 school year. You can find information about the Booster Club and Membership Sign-Up Form on the school's website (www.fortcalhounschools.org), under Community Organizations.

Fort Calhoun Spelling
Bee
Participants



Adriana Hernandez-Champion
Alayna Prunty-Runner Up.



Nick Kusek-Champion
Anna Taylor-Runner Up



Community Resources

Arbor Family Counseling
Fort Calhoun Community Schools has a student assistance contract with Arbor Family Counseling. Please contact their office for an appointment or see the HS counselor, Mrs. Micki Hernandez or the K-8 school counselor, Mrs. Marie Adams for more details about this and/or our new on-site Arbor Family counselor Jennifer (she is here on Wednesday mornings).

-Nebraska Helpline 1-888-866-8660
-National Suicide Prevention Hotline 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
-Crisis Text Line text "help" to 741741
-Boys Town National Hotline -- "You don't have to face your problems ALONE" ~ call: 1-800-448-3000
~ chat: yourlifeyourvoice.org ~ email: yourlifeyourvoice@boystown.org ~ text: "voice" to 20121
-CHI Health Behavioral Crisis Hotline 402-717-HOPE (4673)
-AA Omaha Central Office 402-555-1880
-Narcotics Anonymous 402-660-3662
-The Bridge (domestic abuse / sexual abuse) 1-888-721-4340 Blair Office: 402-533-4411

Professional Therapists in the area:
Choices Counseling (402) 533-3680
Hold Your Horses Equine Therapy (402) 657-6025

-Elementary News-

Your Principal: Drew R. Wagner

Engaging + Learning + Achieving = Productive PIONEERS!

Thank you for your support. Here are a few activities happening around the building since we have been back from winter break. There has been Donuts with Dad and this week we have a fun activity going for the students and staff with “Artist in Resident.” Thank you to our PFE for sponsoring both of these events. Next week we will be hosting our spring Parent/Teacher conferences. If you haven’t signed up with the office please do so as soon as possible. Look forward to seeing you in the building. Let’s chat more on the couple of events that have happened.

Donuts with Dad had another great showing. Thank you for your support with this event. The amount of work that goes into both Donuts with Dad and Morning with Mom is difficult, however rewarding. Thank you all for making this event awesome. We can’t do this without our tremendous partnership. Let’s keep it going!

The Artist in Resident is back with us once again this year. This is our second year participating with this event. The Artist in Residency program involves the entire school and consists of a curriculum-based art project developed and conducted by a teaching artist. Throughout the week, all students will work with the Artist, Julia Noyes, learning about the Mosaic style of painting and take part in the creation of two mosaic murals to be displayed in the school. Thank you again to the PFE for sponsoring!

We will have more activities coming up at the end of February and March. We will be in touch.

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

The mission of the Fort Calhoun Community Schools is to
Foster learning in an inspiring and caring environment, provide
Opportunities for all students to be successful, instill the attributes of
Respect and responsibility among staff and students alike, and present students with the
Tools to succeed in life.

The following excerpts from “**Understanding a Teacher’s Long-Term Impact**” *Fostering skills like self-regulation does more to improve students’ future outcomes than helping them raise their test scores* by Youki Terada published in *edutopia* reinforces our mission of “learning in an inspiring and caring environment”..

As every teacher knows, they teach not just content but a range of skills students will need to be successful as adults. A recent study shows just how important fostering those skills is: Teachers who help students improve noncognitive skills such as self-regulation raise their grades and likelihood of graduating from high school ...

A recent study shows just how important fostering those skills is: Teachers who help students improve noncognitive skills such as self-regulation raise their grades and likelihood of graduating from high school more than teachers who help them improve their standardized test scores do. “Good teachers may affect students much more broadly than through their impact on achievement test scores,” explains the study’s author, C. Kirabo Jackson, an economics professor at Northwestern University.

Looking at data on over 570,000 students in North Carolina, Jackson found that ninth-grade teachers who improved their students’ noncognitive skills—which include motivation and the ability to adapt to new situations, as well as self-regulation—had important impacts on those students: They were more likely to have higher attendance and grades and to graduate than their peers. They were also less likely to be suspended and to be held back a grade. These benefits persisted throughout high school.

The Science of Learning

New research ...helps explain why improving noncognitive skills has long-term benefits. “The science says to us that, in fact, the way the brain functions and grows, it needs safety, it needs warmth, it actually even needs hugs,” Stanford professor Linda Darling-Hammond said in a recent interview. “We actually learn in a state of positive emotion much more effectively than we can learn in a state of negative emotion. That has huge implications for what we do in schools.” When we asked our readers to describe the traits of a life-changing teacher, very few of the responses were about test scores or academics. People overwhelmingly said that great teachers make their students feel safe and loved, believe in their students, model patience, and help their students reach their full potential—all qualities that remain largely unmeasured. And students’ long-term success is often less about academics than behavior. So the best way to keep students in school isn’t necessarily to help them improve their test scores—helping them feel like they belong may have a bigger impact.

The takeaway: Measuring the full value of a teacher goes well beyond their impact on test scores. Teachers who improve students’ noncognitive skills also improve long-term outcomes that include their odds of graduating from high school.

Policy of Nondiscrimination

The School District 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 as required by: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender: Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) as amended - prohibits discrimination on the basis of age with respect to individuals who are at least 40: The Equal Pay Act of 1963 as amended - prohibits gender discrimination in payment of wages to women and men performing substantially equal work in the same establishment: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - prohibits discrimination against the disabled: Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) - prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, public service, public accommodations and telecommunications: The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) - requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to “eligible” employees for certain family and medical reasons: The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions: The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)—provides job protections and reemployment rights to military reservists and National Guard members called to active duty: The Nebraska Fair Employment Practice Act (FEPA) – prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy), disability, marital status, and retaliation: Nebraska Age Discrimination in Employment Act (Age Act) – prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of age for those individuals who are over 40 years of age: The Equal Pay Act of Nebraska – prohibits discriminatory wage practices based on sex: The Nebraska Equal Opportunity in Education Act – prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex (including pregnancy) by any educational institution: Veterans Preference Law (Neb. Rev. Stat §§ 48-225 to 48-231) - stipulates categorical preferences for employment for military veterans and for the spouses of disabled veterans. 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 the superintendent or to the district’s Title IX and/or Section 504/ADA Coordinator.