

## Fort Calhoun Elementary

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Fort Calhoun, NE 68023

Your Principal: Mr. Drew R. Wagner

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Greetings Pioneer Nation! The events/activities around the building may be limited, but we continue to stay busy with keeping our students safe, work as a team, attempt to eliminate learning gaps and prepare for what the future may hold. This has been a very stressful time in education for us. Trying to maintain a consistent environment during an inconsistent time impacts the entire environment for all involved. We are working hard everyday to stay proactive in our approach to keep all safe. I would like to elaborate on a few items of interest as we close out the fall season and head into the winter season.

The first item of interest is safety continues to be our #1 priority. The planning, preparation and implementation each day for our students to be safe and continue learning has been quite the challenge, however we feel the processes we have in place have been successful. We must work together and not create wedges in our relationship as we continue our journey this year. We cannot risk our relationship during this hardship. With that said, please continue to trust our educational process to keep your student safe. I promise you the time, effort and hard work is happening everyday within our school. Thank you for your continued support. Words cannot explain how much we appreciate your support.

Next, our construction project continues to stay on track (Shh...It's actually a head of schedule). If I say it in parenthesis then I won't jinx us. I hope that we continue to stay on track with the projected timeline. We could possibly occupy the new space as early as April. Let's all cross our fingers and hope for the best. We all know how construction can waiver from their timelines fairly quickly. Please continue to follow the elementary twitter account for updated photos of the progress. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me.

As we continue each day and move forward into unknown territory I want everyone to know we are working hard to ensure the next day is as great as the last. I want to say THANK YOU to my staff! Everyday has been a challenge and inconsistent. If you could see how well staff are functioning as a team during one of the hardest times in education you would be proud. I know I am! Please remember when our team is functioning at that high level that means we are keeping all safe with proactive conversations to brainstorming different ideas to ensure we keep our environment safe and positive.

We hope everyone continues to be safe and stay healthy. Thank you for your support. Have a positive day!

As usual, it's a GREAT day to be a PIONEER!

Your Proud Principal,  
Drew R. Wagner



**A  
positive  
attitude  
will get  
you  
anywhere!**



## *What's going on in the classrooms?*

### Early childhood - Mrs. Royuk

Preschoolers have been busy this fall learning about the season of fall, pumpkins, farm animals, pets and turkeys. We have been working on identifying our name, the letters in our name and writing our name. During math we created patterns, sorted and pointed and counted a number of objects. We are practicing sharing, trading and taking turns during our center time. The preschoolers are looking forward to the winter season.

### Kindergarten - Miss Hall, Miss Shupe & Mrs. Leifeld

#### **Reading:**

**Weekly Concepts:** Make New Friends, Get Up and Go!, Use Your Senses,

Tools we Use, Shapes All Around, World of Bugs, Rules to Go By, Sounds Around Us, The Places We Go, Time for Work, Meet Your Neighbors, Pitch In

**Essential Questions:** How can we get along with new friends? How do baby animals move? How can your senses help you learn? How do tools help us to explore? What shapes do you see around you? What kind of bugs do you know about? What rules do we follow in different places? What are the different sounds we hear? What places do you go to during the week? What do people use to do their jobs? Who are your neighbors? How can people help to make your community better?

**Vocabulary:** friend, problem, adventure, movement, senses, explore, tool, discover, materials, nature, curious, observe, cooperate, rules, listen, volume, routine, neighborhood, equipment, uniform, cultures, appreciate, community, improve

**High Frequency Words:** I, can, the, we, see, a, like, to, and, go, you, do

**Letter Identification:** Aa-Hh, Ii-Rr, Ss-Zz

**Phonics:** m, a, s, p, t, i, n, c, o, d,

**Category words:** names, numbers, days of the week, feeling words, family words, senses, color words, movement words, action words, sound words, jobs, kinds of food, position words

**Comprehension:** key details, sequence words, character setting, events, key details in sequence

#### Math:

Numbers 0 to 5  
Compare Numbers 0-5  
Numbers 6-10  
Compare Numbers 6 to 10  
Classify and Count Data  
Understand Addition  
Understand Subtraction

#### Science

Pushes and Pulls  
Matter

#### Social Studies:

Learning and working together  
National and State Symbols  
Work Now and Long Ago



**Engaging +  
Learning+  
Achieving  
= Productive  
PIONEERS!**

### 1st grade - Mrs. Spellerberg, Mrs. Rohrich & Mrs. Weingaertner

#### Reading

The first graders have completed our first unit in reading! The students have learned the short a, short i, and l-blend sounds. They have been doing a great job reading and are finding the key details in their stories.

#### Grammar

The students have been practicing writing sentences. We make sure to have a capital letter, punctuation mark, and a whole idea every time we write. We are beginning to talk about different kinds of sentences. The students will practice writing statements, questions, and exclamatory sentences.

#### Math

The first graders have been digging into addition and subtraction. They have been using different strategies like counting on, counting back, using a number line, doubles, and making a ten to find the sum and difference. We have also been learning how addition and subtraction are related.

#### Science

The first graders have been learning all about sound. We are learning how to describe the different sounds that we hear everyday. We will discover why certain things make the sounds that they do. Lastly, we will explore the many uses of sound and why it is so important!

#### Social Studies

The students have been learning about the rights and responsibilities of citizens. We have also discussed the importance of our leaders and government as well. Soon we will dive into the geography of our community and word.

## **2nd grade - Mrs. Hallberg & Miss Schulenberg**

### Language Arts

- \*Comprehension skill – Ask and Answer Questions, Main Idea & Key Details
- \*Long Vowel Combinations
- \*Vocab strategies – finding text evidence, synonyms/antonyms
- \*Action Verbs, Present and Past Tense Verbs
- \*Genre – Narrative Non-Fiction & Expository Text

### Math

- \*Subtraction within 100 – open number lines, break apart numbers, hundreds chart
- \*Starting Subtraction with regrouping
- \*MEMORIZE FACTS – Practice Flashcards

### Social Studies

- \* Producing and Consuming
- \* Everyday Heroes

### Science

- \*Changes in Matter – physical and chemical
- \*Earth's Landforms

Thank you so much for your continued support in getting homework finished and binders signed. During the upcoming days off please continue to work on Lexia, IXL and reading lots of wonderful stories together! We hope you all have a wonderful holiday season with your families!

## **3rd grade - Mrs. Benoit, Mrs. Szlachetka & Mrs. Hodson** **"Pioneer Strong"**

### Math:

- We can multiply numbers using different strategies
- We can memorize my multiplication facts
- We can use information to make bar graphs and picture graphs
- We can find information using bar graphs and picture graphs

### Reading:

- We can tell the main idea and details in a reading passage
- We can answer questions about informational texts.
- We can make predictions while reading
- We can retell what we have read
- We can visualize what we read

### Grammar/Writing:

- We can combine sentences
- We can write the correct verb tense
- We can write possessive and plural nouns

### Social Studies:

- We can tell how geography influences where people live
- We can tell how the past connects to the present

### Science:

- We can tell how water affects weather
- We can describe the weather conditions for each season



### 4th grade - Mrs. Omer & Mrs. Schleifer

Wow! These fourth graders have been working really hard and learning a lot this last semester!

In reading, animals in literature have been the theme in Reading Wonders, Unit 2. Now in Unit 3, fantasy and realistic fiction will be our focus. Lyric and haiku poetry have kept us busy with descriptive writing. Remember that Lexia is available to work on at home! This fabulous program reinforces what is taught in class.

In math, we have just finished up multiplying 2-digit by 2-digit numbers. The students have learned a lot of different strategies for multiplication and will be using those same strategies to help them learn to divide by 1-digit. As math continues to get tougher, it would be beneficial to keep practicing those math facts!

In science, we have learned a lot about energy and how we use it! We had a lot of great conversations about how these uses can affect our environment and what we can do to reduce that affect. Next, we are diving into learning about waves and information. The students will become secret agents and create a secret communication method. They will demonstrate how it works; after we investigate this phenomenon.

### 5th grade - Miss Carlson, Mrs. Romans & Mrs. Beacom

The fifth graders are off to a fabulous start! We have been working hard to accomplish our goals.

In math we have studied decimal place value, decimal addition & subtraction, decimal multiplication, and whole number multiplication. Now we are learning how to divide whole numbers and decimals. Next up, we will move on to studying fractions and learning how to add and subtract them.

In language arts, we have been studying many kinds of verbs and how to use them correctly in different tenses. We have been reading expository (informational) text as well as persuasive articles. Soon we will be studying folklore genres including fairy tales, folktales, fables, legends, and myths. We will also be learning more about figurative language.

In Social Studies, we completed a study of American Indian civilizations and culture. We also studied early European explorers and have now moved on to learn about the settling of the English colonies.

We just wrapped up our Science unit on Earth's systems where we explored the 4 spheres that exist on our Earth. We are continuing to study how Earth's water is important to our lives, as well as how we as humans impact the spheres.

The fifth graders also completed a slew of writing projects during the first quarter, including writing their own letters, poems, and persuasive, informative, opinion, & point of view essays.

A reminder that Lexia Reading and Math IXL are great online resources that can be utilized at school and at home. Your students should know their usernames and passwords to access these programs. There is also daily work posted to the online Canvas platform for the second quarter, should your child miss any time at school.

Stay safe!

Mrs. Beacom, Miss Carlson, & Mrs. Romans

### 6th grade - Mr. Smith, Mr. Mallette & Mr. Teeter

Wow! We have made it to half way through the second quarter and winter break will be here before we know it. Please watch for the NWEA schedule; we will have another round of that and dibels before the break.

In math, we are working on representing and solving equations and inequalities. Please continue to work on math facts. Your student has learned a new math game called take 2 ten. Feel free to race them at it.

As a class, we have been progressing through the Wonders Reading Program. We have also been working on various reading and writing skills as we forward this year. Not only are we utilizing the program's instructional tools, but the students have also been doing more interactive learning by doing a Reader's Theater. This activity is a little play or skit the student performed in class. From here on out we are going to still be focused on completing our reading units, but while focusing a little more on our writing process.

The student will still be getting weekly outlines containing their vocabulary words and spelling words. These might be good dinner topics or things to work on quickly at home.

In science, we have been learning about the advancements in cell studies and structure/function of cells. We are working towards cell transporting materials and cell division. We will be ending this topic with a test and creating an informational video explaining their Cell Exhibit. The next topic that the students will be working on deals with Human Body Systems. Ask your student questions about what they learned from each day and even review with them by working on their flashcards.

In social studies, we are finishing up our topic over early civilizations and empires. Our next topic will be on Ancient Egypt.

Keep reminding your student to wear their mask appropriately and social distance.



### From the Nurse's Office-Sara Ruma RN and Sara Ruthven RN

Confused about COVID? Here are some helpful guidelines for with COVID-19. If you have any questions please refer to the attached guidelines chart or call our health office at the Elementary

#### **Have I been exposed? What counts as a close contact?**

- You were unmasked within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more on any day that they may have been infectious, you must quarantine.

#### **Watch yourself for symptoms of COVID-19**

- Fever or Chills, Cough, Shortness of breath or trouble breathing, Tiredness, Muscle or body aches, Headache, New loss of taste or smell, Sore throat, Congestion or runny nose, Nausea or Vomiting and Diarrhea

**Stay Home-** If you cannot stay home for 14 days, you may be able to shorten your in home quarantine by meeting the following conditions:

- You can get tested on or after day 5 after exposure
- With a negative test-** If you have no symptoms on or before day 7 and tested negative on or after day 5, you can discontinue in home quarantine on day 8. You must keep wearing your mask at all times and monitor for symptoms through day 14.
- Without a test-** If you no symptoms on or before day 10, you can discontinue in home quarantine on day 11. You must keep wearing your mask at all times and monitor for symptoms through day 14.

#### **What if I've previously tested positive for COVID-19?**

People who have tested positive for COVID-19 do not need to quarantine or get tested again for up to 3 months as long as they do not develop symptoms again.

#### **What can I do to reduce the spread and stay healthy?**

- Call your doctor and get tested if you have COVID-19 symptoms
- Wear a mask when required or suggested
- Wash hands often or use hand sanitizer
- Avoid large groups or crowds
- Keep 6 feet of distance between yourself and others

### **From the School Counselor-Marie Adams**

We have been very busy with our Anger Control unit. We continue to emphasize throughout the unit that anger itself is a feeling that is not a problem. It is the choices we make that sometimes causes anger to become a problem.

As we explore many different approaches in order to understand anger and ways to calm down, we have been singing songs, reading books, and creating role plays. As usual, the kids' creativity in this has been phenomenal!

### **High Ability Learners (HAL)**

The students that qualified for the HAL program according to our matrices are currently working on a variety of projects. Some of those projects are solving mysteries, building and learning to fly drones, designing and building prototypes of sidewalk robots, and bridge-building. The activities all include collaboration, problem-solving, and critical thinking as the driving forces.

#### **Problem Solving Process:**

Define  
Prepare  
Try  
Reflect

#### **21st Century Skills:**

### **Behavior Interventionist (BI)-Mr. PJ Mallette**

The goal of this role is to continue collaborating with teachers to best assist and support students. Our focus is always 4 to 1 positive to negative interactions. Research shows that when you ignore negative behaviors and reinforce positive behaviors consistently then that is when you see behaviors improve. Some methods we use to support students are behavior charts, check-ins, goal-setting, rewards, peer models, walk and talks, etc. These methods will not be effective without creating positive relationships with students first! If you have any questions and need to contact me please do not hesitate to do so.

### Virtual Accreditation-Nebraska Frameworks

The state of Nebraska mandates each district in the state to be accredited and uphold a certain standard in educating students. The school district strives each year to continually improve our educational process to impact our learning environment. We recently transitioned from an accreditation with Cognia to Nebraska Frameworks. The transitioned happened with the idea of what platform fits our culture the best. Nebraska Frameworks is our state's accreditation process. We are fortunate to have a virtual accreditation on Wednesday, December 2. A team of Nebraska educators will perform this visit through conversation, interviews and artifacts. Once this process is complete we will share our results through our website under the school improvement tab. Thank you for your continued support during a hard time.





## PFE NEWS

Hello from Pioneers for Education!

On November 6th, PFE was able to host the annual Walk-A-Thon! It was a beautiful day for the students to be outside walking with their classrooms and teachers. Over \$6,600 was raised from the walk! The number was under our goal, but regardless we were amazed by the generosity and support during the middle of a pandemic.



Spirit Fridays are back! Don't forget to send your student in their orange or their Pioneer gear every Friday. The classroom that has the highest percentage of spirit wear in their room receives a special reward.

PFE held a public meeting via Zoom on November 16th. The PFE officers, administrators, and a few community members attended. Our next public meeting will be held in January. We hope to see you there, either in person or on Zoom. Look for our announcements on our Facebook page and the school website, regarding meeting time and location.

Thanks to all who support Pioneers for Education through volunteering, Membership commitment, and Corporate Sponsorship. PFE has been able to do great things this school year such as fulfilling staff requests, providing staff meals, and rewarding elementary students for participating in Spirit Fridays and the Walk-a-Thon. We'd like to recognize the businesses that have so generously sponsored PFE for the 2020/21 school year. Abe's Trash Service, Able Transport Solutions, DeSoto Hill Studio, Exterior Remodel & Design, The Longhorn, Northwest Feed, Pure Driven Garage, Rock Hard Concrete, The Rustic, Seal-Rite Solutions, Taylor Quik Pik, Washington County Bank, and Zig Drywall. We appreciate you!

If you have any questions or ideas for PFE, please reach out to us at [pioneersforeducation@gmail.com](mailto:pioneersforeducation@gmail.com).

PFE Officers:

President- Sarah Tinkham

Vice President- Brad Earley

Treasurer- Shannon Pokorski

Secretary- Joey Iwen

Communication Coordinator- Ronee Christensen

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**VISIT OUR NEW  
WEBSITE:**

**[www.fortcalhoun  
schools.org](http://www.fortcalhounschools.org)**

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## **REMINDER**

**All Fridays during the year are early outs. The Elementary will dismiss students at 1:15 pm.**

## **Upcoming events:**

December 14: No School - Teacher Inservice Day  
December 22: Early Out; 1:15pm dismissal  
December 23-January 4: No School - Christmas Break  
January 4: No School-Teacher Inservice Day  
January 5: School Resumes  
February 1: No School - Teacher Inservice Day  
February 17 & 18: Parent-Teacher Conferences/Early Out  
February 19: No School

**\*\*All dates are subject to change. Also refer to our district master calendar for all other dates.**



## **Our Mission at Fort Calhoun Schools:**

**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.**

## **Our Purpose:**

**Engaging + Learning + Achieving = Productive PIONEERS!**