

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT’S OFFICE

A Difficult Success

As the semester comes to an end it is important to reflect on all that has happened. As I do that I have come to the conclusion that we have been tremendously successful in a very difficult time. Maybe our greatest success is that we are still in school. Not all school districts were able to keep their doors open to all students through out the semester. We obviously had some people have to go into isolation and others have had to quarantine, but we were able to average over 90% of our students in attendance during the semester. That is a great success.

We have asked ALL of our staff to more. Bus drivers, cooks, custodians, office personnel, teachers and paras were all asked to do more, way beyond anyone’s expectations and they all did it. I am sure some days were more challenging than others but as we look back on the semester we were able to accomplish our goal: Keep kids safe and keep them in school. Congratulations.

We have to recognize the student’s and families. They were also asked to see things differently, to do things differently. Without their willingness to adapt to the new normal we would have struggled more than needed. Nothing about this semester was perfect, we knew it wouldn’t be and next semester will not be much different. The continued understanding of this difficult time and what we need to do to keep kids safe and keep kids in school is vital to keeping our doors open.

I offer all of you a Thank You! It has been difficult at times but is has been a success! We will continue for forge ahead but not before a little time off. Enjoy your family and friends.

Jerry Green  
Superintendent  
Fort Calhoun Community Schools



OPTION ENROLLMENT 2020

The Option Enrollment application period for the 2021-22 school year is now open through March 15, 2021. Forms are available on our website or at the school offices. The School Board sets class size and program parameters in February/ March and according to State law, all applicants must be notified one way or another by April 1st.

WELCOME TO FORT CALHOUN

We are growing and to be prepared we continually maintain a census of our residents to determine future needs.

**Residents:** Please help us with our child count by reporting your children up to 18 years old. If you have not already notified us or there has been a change in your household, call the District office at 402-468-5591 with your information. Thank you.



**McKenna Greenwell, Ellie Lienemann and Rianna Wells** were named Class C-1 All State Honorable Mention for Volleyball by the *Omaha World Herald*. They were also named All Area Honorable Mention by the *Omaha World Herald*. Congrats on all your hard work!

**McKenna** also earned Class C-1 All State Honorable Mention from the *Lincoln Journal Star*.

**Dillon Dierks** and **Zane Schwarz** were selected as both All State Football Honorable Mention and All Omaha Area Football by the *Omaha World Herald*. **Dillon** and **Zane** were also named All State Honorable Mention by the *Lincoln Journal Star*.

## **Elementary News**

**Your Proud Principal: Drew R. Wagner**

*Engaging + Learning + Achieving = Productive PIONEERS!*

Happy New Year! The events/activities around the building may be limited, but we continue to stay busy with keeping our students safe (mentally and physically), 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 on a daily basis. We are working hard every day 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 first semester and head into the New Year.

The first item of interest, 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. Part of this planning involved revisiting our "Fort Calhoun Elementary Reopening Plan." The plans have been updated and invited purposeful discussion on plans for the future. Please don't hesitate to visit our website to review the updated plan. With that said, please continue to trust our educational process to keep your student(s) safe. I promise you the time, effort and hard work is happening everyday within our school. 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. Now 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!



**Andrew Christensen**  
**Assistant Principal/AD**

Congratulation to our All-District, All-Conference, and Academic All-State nominations from our fall seasons:

☐ Cross Country

- State Medalists- Bria Bench (9) and Jacob Rupp (13)
- Academic All-State- Tessa Skelton, John McKennan, and Jacob Rupp

☐ Football

- All-District- Dillon Dierks, Clint Dierks, Justin Myer, and Zane Schwarz
- Honorable Mention- Tristan Hansen, Jayce Douchey, Jake Seina, and Ty Hallberg
- Academic All-State- Jayce Douchey and Jayden Hunter

☐ Softball

- Honorable Mention All-Conference- McKenzie Hansen, Katie Barta, and Maddie Reed
- Academic All-State- Katie Barta and McKenzie Hansen

☐ Volleyball

- 1<sup>st</sup> Team All-Conference- McKenna Greenwell
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Team All-Conference- Ellie Lienemann
- Academic All-State- Kaitlin Smith and Rianna Wells

For all Covid-19 guidance for home and away activities, please refer to our school website. Go to [fortcalhounschool.org](http://fortcalhounschool.org) – Pioneer Pride – Covid Resources- Click on the desired sport. Information is updated on a daily basis. You can also find Covid-19 guidance on the school activities twitter- @ftcactivities. Although every school will follow the Nebraska Directed Health Measures, each school will look a little different. For the most updated information, please visit our school website or check our activities twitter page on the day of the activity.

Winter Activities: Please know we are dependent upon the NSAA, Three Rivers Health Department, and the NDE to establish our winter plans. Information continues to come and change, and we will communicate through the winter seasons. Our coaches are going above and beyond to provide a safe environment for our students in the weight room, skill development, and practices.

Due to potential restrictions at our activities this year, we are being proactive to provide options for fans to support our Pioneers. A live streaming system will be offered through [nfhsnetwork.com](http://nfhsnetwork.com). A camera has been installed in our competition gym and football field. With a subscription, fans will have access to watch live activities at Fort Calhoun High School. A portion of the subscription comes back to Fort Calhoun Schools. The live stream is only in the new gym. We will play as many games in the new gym as possible, but some games will have to be played in the old gym without the live stream.

☐ Monthly Subscription- \$10.99

☐ Annual Subscription- \$69.99

Thank you,

Andrew Christensen  
Assistant Principal/AD





**MR. NICK WEMHOFF**  
**Principal**

I hope everyone has had a great winter break...you all deserve it! This has always been great time to be surrounded by your family and friends as you celebrate the holidays and the start of a new year. Although your 2020 holiday season may not have looked the same as it has in the past, it still provides an opportunity to slow down and reflect. 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!

2020 brought about many challenges for our students and their families, the school staff, and our community. We all sat in quarantine as we figured out what was happening as the pandemic entered our lives. We all sacrificed precious time away from people we love to keep them and ourselves safe and healthy. We learned to live in a new way hoping that tomorrow would bring a better day. Yes, I believe most of us agree we are ready to close the book on the year 2020.

As I reflect on 2020, what I have come to realize is that it did not go wasted. I watched in amazement as everyone in our community adapted and grew together. Those who could help did: nurses, doctors, police officers and emergency responders, etc. Neighbors helped one another by being there for each other. Families spent quality time together enjoying moments that will last a lifetime. Yes, 2020 taught us many things. To me, the greatest lesson of the past year was that of relationships. Together, we survived the pandemic of 2020. Together, we grew stronger.

In closing, I want to thank everyone who has done anything for someone else during this pandemic. No matter how big or how small; a donation of time, money or food; being there for a friend, a neighbor, a family member; the sharing of a smile. Every act meant something to someone...and that means a lot. Thank you and may you all have a great 2021!

*“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot,  
Nothing is going to get better. It’s not.”*  
— Dr. Seuss

**TITLE IX INFORMATION**

Fort Calhoun Community Schools Board of Education passed Policy 3057 at their August 10, 2020 meeting addressing all areas of discrimination. This policy can be found on the schools’ website [fortcalhounschoools.org](http://fortcalhounschoools.org). Go to “About, Board of Education, Policies” and scroll down to Policy 3057-Title IX.

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES OPEN**

**Fort Calhoun Community Schools high school gyms, fitness center, and Community Building are now open to youth sports and fitness center members. Check the link on our website for more information.**

**WEIGHT ROOM USE**

The high school weight room is available for use by District patrons. A fob is issued for a fee of \$50.00 which renews each June 1st. If you have any questions contact Mr. Andrew Christensen at 402-468-5591.



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

School Improvement News

Our district’s accreditation review was on Wednesday, December 2. The accreditation process involves hosting an external visit every five years. This process looked very different this year due to COVID restrictions. We hosted a virtual external visit that consisted of Nebraska educators around the state. The visit went very well. You should be proud! The feedback we received was outstanding. In summary, the team discussed how do you take excellent to outstanding. We anticipate receiving a final report from the external team soon. Lastly, I would like to mention a few words from the lead evaluator during our visit. In conversation, mentioned he has done over 25 visits in his career and that this was one of the best external visits that he was ever a part of. Wow! What great validation for all stakeholders in Fort Calhoun Community Schools. Go Pioneers!



**Happy Holidays from  
Pioneers for Education!**

We hope this finds you healthy and ready to begin an awesome 2021 school year!

PFE is working on some great things for winter and spring, that we hope to be sharing with families very soon.

We want to thank 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



**Happenings\***

<b>1/1/21</b>	<b>HAPPY NEW YEAR</b>
<b>1/5/21</b>	<b>School Resumes</b>
<b>1/10-11</b>	<b>Doane Honor Choir</b>
<b>1/11</b>	<b>School Board Meeting</b>
<b>1/16</b>	<b>Show Choir @ Gretna Competition</b>
<b>1/22</b>	<b>UNO Middle School Honor Choir</b>
<b>1/22-24</b>	<b>Band @ UNL Winter Festival</b>
<b>1/24</b>	<b>Choir @ UNO Boch Festival</b>
<b>1/29-31</b>	<b>UNO Honor Band</b>

**\*Activities are subject to change and Restricted Admittance may be announced**

***There Is Such a Thing as Free Lunch  
(and Free Breakfast)***

*Because of the COVID pandemic and schools’ situations nationwide, the USDA has extended the waivers to schools to furnish free meals to all school age children until the end of the school year. Fort Calhoun Community Schools, under the direction of the Nebraska Child Nutrition Program, will provide free school breakfast and lunch to all students K-12 whether in person or remote learners under this program through May 20, 2021 which is our last day of school.*

*Letters were sent to all households explaining the program. Let us know if you have questions.*