

Spring Parent Newsletter



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

The end of the school year is here. I don't know why but every year it seems like, "I can't believe it's the end of the school year already!" and "Where did it go?" Educators say this every year because each year we try to reflect on what happened and did we make a difference. The challenges this year were exactly what we were thinking... ARDUOUS! I can truly say we made progress. Is it progress that you can physically view? Possibly! However, the true gift that occurred this year was the amount of resiliency that was built with each student, staff, and parent. This resiliency needed to be rebuilt so we can accomplish bigger and better things in the future. The foundation is solid because of the challenges that we overcame this school year. We continue to look toward the future in several different manners to ensure this progress is heading in the right direction. Proactive thinking, consistency, and follow through will lead the way.

Proactive thinking is a challenge when you don't take the past into consideration. We continue to evaluate how our practices currently are productive and/or nonproductive. This philosophy goes into all facets of our building. All staff are continually evaluating the data to ensure students are heading in the right direction with all skills (academically, socially, emotionally, behaviorally and character) to be successful. The challenges continue with this concept to ensure we don't repeat negative trends of the past.

Consistency and follow through are always a task we work hard toward. This year, like many, these two processes should have been coordinated with communication. This communication is vital with consistency and follow through. These actions ultimately will keep students engaged at school. We must have this positive partnership to get to our end goal. We can do this together!

We hope our actions spoke louder than words this year. The trust we must embed into our process is essential to your student. Let's continue to grow together!

At the end of the day the best gift we can provide each family is a safe learning environment where students thrive to become the most productive human being possible for our future society.

Thank you for your support this year. It truly meant the world to us. I hope you have a wonderful summer with family and friends. Take care!

GO PIONEERS!

Drew R. Wagner
Your Elementary Principal

Engaging + Learning + Achieving = Productive PIONEERS!



What's going on in the classrooms?

Early childhood - Mrs. Royuk and Miss Fleischman

Preschool has been busy this spring. We had a number of community helpers come to our class and share how they help others, we hatched baby chicks, practiced recycling and planted seeds. The preschoolers have been working on forming and identifying the rest of the letters in the alphabet. They have been pointing and counting different amounts of objects. We will continue to work on writing our name using the correct letter formations and making story predictions. We are looking forward to summer break!

Kindergarten - Ms. Hall, Mrs. Kelsey and Mrs. Leifeld

Reading:

Weekly Concepts: The Four Seasons, What's the Weather? Stormy Weather, Baby Animals, Pet Pals, Animal Habitats, On the Move, My USA, Growing Up, Good Citizens, Our Natural Resources, Problem Solvers, Sort it Out, Protect our Earth

Essential Questions: How are the seasons different? What happens in different kinds of weather? How can you stay safe in bad weather? How are some animals alike and how are they different? How do you take care of different kinds of pets? Where do animals live? What can help you go from here to there? What do you know about our country? How can you help out at home? How can you be a good citizen? How can things in Nature be used to make new things? What can happen when we work together? In what ways are things alike? How are they different? What ideas can you suggest to protect the environment?

Vocabulary: weather, seasons, predict, temperature, safe, and prepare, appearance, behavior, responsibility, train, habitat, and wild, transportation, vehicle, country, travel, chores, contribute, citizen, respect, natural resources, create, decide, opinion, sort, similar, environment, and protect

High Frequency Words: is, little, she, was, for, have, they, of, said, want, here, me, this, what, help, too, play, has, where, look, who, good, come, does,

Phonics: b, l, initial k and final ck, u, g, w, x, v, j, qu, y, z, long a, long i, long o, long u, long e

Category words: seasons, weather words, question words, animal parts, pets, animal homes, vehicles, ordinal numbers, household furniture, farm animals, food made from grain, question words, opposites, names of baby animals

Comprehension: character setting, events, key details in sequence, main topic and key details, key details in sequence, key details, compare and contrast, cause and effect, sequence

Math:

- More Addition and Subtraction
- count Numbers to 20
- Compose and Decompose Numbers 11-19
- Count Numbers to 100
- Identify and describe shapes
- Analyze, compare, and create shapes
- Describe and compare measurable attributes

Social Studies:

- Geography of a Neighborhood
- Time and Chronology
- Learning about the past

Science:

- Needs of living things
- Environments

1st grade - Mrs. Spellerberg, Mrs. Weingaertner and Mrs. Zeringue

Reading: In reading, the students have continued focusing on long vowel combinations. They are also reading words with prefixes, suffixes, and inflectional endings. They are getting a lot of practice with sequencing. The first graders are using the words first, next, then, and last to tell what happens in a story. Each week we add new vocabulary words that go along with the essential question.

Grammar: In grammar, the students have been learning about adjectives which has helped to make their writing more interesting. They have also been learning about articles a, an, this, and that and when to use them.

Math: In math, the first graders have finished up learning all of their first-grade content. Out last topics included measuring lengths, telling time, reasoning with shapes and their attributes, and looking at equal share of circles and rectangles. We will spend the next few weeks working in our "Step Up to Grade 2" topics.

Social Studies: The first graders have been learning about geography in the community. They have practiced relative and absolute location by using maps and models. The students have also learned about land and water on Earth.

Science: Students just finished up exploring light in science. They learned about shadows, reflection, and the importance of light. Moving on the the next topic, we will be talking all about the sky and the earth.

2nd grade - Mrs. Hallberg, Miss Schulenberg and Mrs. Hodson

Language Arts

- *Comprehension skill – Problem & Solution, Cause and Effect
- *Silent Letters – Reviewing sounds learned this year
- *Vocab strategies – Contractions, Homophones, Idioms
- *Adjectives & Adverbs
- *Prepositional Phrases

Math

- *Reviewing 3-digit Addition & Subtraction
- *Geometry & Fractions
- *Beginning Multiplication
- *MEMORIZE, MEMORIZE, MEMORIZE FACTS

Social Studies

- *Producers and Consumers
- *Wants and Needs
- *Branches of Government

Science

- *Animal Habitats
- *Conservation of Animals

2nd grade has enjoyed many hands-on activities this Spring! We had a fantastic year with your kids and are excited to see them as 3rd graders! Thank you for your support at school and at home this year, it makes a huge difference! Please continue to utilize Lexia and IXL at home this summer to review and keep up on skills. Dibels (fluency assessment) and NWEA testing went very well and we couldn't be happier with the progress our students have made this year! Again, thank you for all your hard work at home, it is appreciated!

3rd grade - Mrs. Benoit, Mrs. Szlachetka and Mrs. Hodson

"The Greatest School on Earth"

The state assessment, NSCAS, was completed in April.

WE made a trip to the Washington County Fair Grounds for "A Day on the Farm."

Field Day was so much fun!!!

It has been a very fun and exciting year!

Math:

We can practice Math FLASHCARDS throughout the summer!

We can work on IXL throughout the summer!

Reading:

We can READ this summer!

We can work on CORE5 throughout the summer!

Writing:

We can keep a summer journal about all of the summer adventures and activities!

We can enjoy our summer break with family and friends!



4th grade - Mrs. Omer, Mrs. Schleifer and Mrs. Jones

It's hard to believe the school year is almost over! Our fourth graders have been awesome and hard working! All students diligently reviewed for the NSCAS tests in Reading and Math. We are very proud of their efforts!

We have finished Science by making body maps and investigating our body's systems and how they work together to help us survive.

Our outstanding children visited the State Capitol Building and met Senator Hansen in March. Students are working diligently to complete their Nebraska A-Z books and are busy presenting to their peers. Pioneer wagons, displaying their Nebraska history knowledge, will be next on our agenda.

Enjoy your summer vacation, and always remember to READ!!

5th grade - Ms. Carlson, Mrs. Romans and Miss Rice

The fifth graders have had a busy third quarter! It is hard to believe we are now at the point in the year where we need to review, review, review for our upcoming state assessments and be proud of everything we have learned.

In math we have learned how to add, subtract, multiply and divide whole numbers, decimals, and fractions. We have studied three-dimensional shapes, completed our geometry unit, and are working on converting between fractions, decimals, and percents.

In language arts, we have been reviewing all parts of speech and have worked on organizing our writing into complete paragraphs. We have been studying figurative language, author's purpose, text structure, and author's point of view. We have also completed our unit on folklore genres including fairy tales, folktales, fables, legends, and myths.

In Social Studies, we have finished learning about the American Revolution. Now, we are studying the writing of the U.S. Constitution and the organization of our government.

In Science, the fifth graders have wrapped up their unit on Matter & Energy in Organisms and Ecosystems. We are working hard to review everything we have learned for our NSCAS Science assessment.

Our field trip to Platte River State Park was chilly but successful. The students spent all day outside learning about outdoor activities and plants/animals of Nebraska. Thank you to everyone who joined us!

As we prepare for the end of another school year, we want all to keep this in mind: *Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out.*

Miss Rice, Miss Carlson, & Mrs. Romans

6th grade - Mr. Mallette, Mrs. Johanek and Mr. Teeter

We have had a great last quarter. We have just finished our last round of State testing and the students really took their time and tried their best. We are so proud of the 6th graders and wish them the best of luck at the big house next year! Remember to have a fun and enjoyable summer. Recharge and enjoy family and friends, but keep in mind that IXL and LEXIA are available to them to keep practicing.

Math is wrapping up in the textbook and various activities to close out the year. You can encourage your student to log into IXL and practice different skills.

ELA we have been continuing to work through our Reading Wonders books. The students have just finished reading some historical fiction stories. We are finishing up our persuasive project. While we keep working through our reading genres, we will have two more projects. Students will have some great opportunities to really be creative and choose their upcoming topics. During this experience they can explore some topics that they are really passionate about. The students are really working hard and ELA has been a real joy for me this year.

In the world of science, we have ended our year with energy! The students enjoyed being able to not only learn about energy, work, force, etc. but to actually see these items in action doing many hands-on labs. The students have been provided the opportunity to also show what they have learned by creating a fun and wacky machine that displays how energy is used to solve problems/tasks, called a Rube Goldberg Machine! This is always a fun project for the students to complete and a great way for the fifth grade students to see a snapshot of all of the fun challenges they will be facing next year when they get to sixth grade!

Philosophers, wars/battles, dramas, art, democracy, and many more cultural studies was our main focus to end the year in our social studies world. The students really seemed to enjoy learning about this ancient civilization. They were extremely excited when given the opportunity to also create their own Greek Mythology Story. This group really did a fantastic job creating these stories using the great writing skills they obtained from their ELA classes this year as well!



From the Nurse's Office: Amy Morris MSN, RN

Did you know that coming to school sick can actually impact academic performance? It's okay to stay home and focus on getting better. To return to school, students should be fever and vomit free for 24 hours. If you are unsure-stay home and contact your child's healthcare provider for guidance.

As the end of the year approaches, I would like to remind you to pick up your child's medication before Wednesday, May 17th, 2023. The school will not store medication over the summer. **ALL** medications will be disposed of if not picked up from the office by a parent or guardian.

NO MEDICATION WILL BE SENT HOME WITH STUDENTS.

From the School Counselor:

We are ending our amazing year with a careers unit. The lower elementary is doing different activities focusing on community helpers and different tools that are used for careers. The upper elementary is doing multiple activities linking subjects to careers, matching skills with careers, taking interest inventories, and even writing a resume.

The 6th graders had the opportunity with an 8th grade panel on Friday April 28th. 5 of my 8th graders came down to the elementary to answer questions about junior high. I am hoping this panel of experts helped with some of the concerns with the upcoming transition to the junior high. Now to finish the year strong and get ready to enjoy summer!

Mrs. Adams

High Ability Learners (HAL)

HAL was another success. We continue to grow the program to create opportunities for higher-level thinking activities through hands-on learning. A couple of recent additions were SPHERO Bolts and Lego Education Spike Essential Kits. If you would like some additional information on camps around the area please do not hesitate to reach out! Have a great summer everyone!

Mr. PJ Mallette

Behavior Interventionist (BI)

HAPPY MAY!, I'd like to say thank you to everyone for their support this year. We continue to try our hardest to be proactive with behaviors so that we can foster a positive learning environment for ALL STUDENTS! This cannot get accomplished without parental support which we have had a great amount of this year. Our students worked hard to be the best version of themselves every day. When there were hiccups along the way we were able to hold students accountable and provide tools and guidance on how to learn from their mistakes. Plenty of life lessons were had. Also, I'm hoping that at some point all students came home and were able to say they were pioneer of the day or told a story about earning a ticket or winning a raffle because we have set clear expectations throughout our building and then reinforce positive behaviors every single day. We should all be very proud of our students here at Fort Calhoun Elementary.

Mr. PJ Mallette

LIBRARY

Our Pioneers are using technology, staying engaged with activities designed to develop creativity, problem solving and critical thinking skills.

Students in grades K-6 have been using their critical thinking and problem solving skills when writing code to create animation.

Our new Micro:bits were a hit with 5th and 6th graders. To make these work, the students wrote code to make their Micro:bit play music and light up with words and images.

For 6th graders accustomed to creating with bins of Legos, they were perplexed when given six Legos with instructions to create a unique structure. They wrote instructions for how to build it, then paired up to see if they could follow their partner's directions.

Using Chrome Canvas, kids in grades 1-6 have created drawings and paintings. With this app, they can also add photos and graphics that they can embellish. Their designs can be inserted into Google Slides to make a slideshow of their artwork. Kindergarten will be introduced to this app later this week.

During these last two weeks of school, 5th and 6th graders will be using Google Slides to create Word Art, which involves filling text with images.

As always, kids in grades 3-6 continue to spend a portion of most library classes developing and honing their keyboarding skills.

And if you haven't seen it yet, we have a large touch screen TV in the library that the kids enjoy using for drawing and painting pictures.

All library books are due Friday, May 5. Thank you for your help in getting these back!

Sheri Homolka PreK-12 Librarian



PFE NEWS

Pioneers for Education would like to Congratulate the Class of 2023! We have had the privilege of watching you grow through the years into the fine people you are today! The future holds great things for you all!

We would like to wish Happy Retirement to Mary Carlson, Dave Neumann, and Mark Welsher! The impact you have all had on the children and families in the district is immeasurable. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts, you will be greatly missed!

PFE brought this year to a close with our Spring Carnival on Friday, April 21st. It was a great night for our community. We loved seeing everyone together enjoying games, bounce houses, face painting, music, and food. Special thanks to Fierce and Fancy Faces, DJ Boomer, and Jimmy's Hot Dog Cart for joining us and making our event even better. Thanks to everyone in attendance and a huge THANK YOU to those who volunteered including Kelli BenSalah our event chair.

In order to continue providing fun activities like the one above, we need your help! We need volunteers to step into leadership roles. We are still looking to fill the Vice President position for the 2023-24 school year. We also have openings for a Chair Person for a number of our events. Help us spread the word so we can fill these positions and keep PFE going strong.

That being said we would like to thank Matt Reichert and Nicole Duros for their dedication the past two years. The school community greatly benefited from your time and talents. While this is not goodbye, we offer you our sincerest Thank You! We also want to say a big thanks to every teacher and staff member in the district! Our children continue to thrive because of you! Thank you for another great year!

You can find information on becoming a PFE member on our PFE Facebook Page, on the school website, or by contacting us directly at pioneersforeducation@gmail.com.

Your Officer Team,

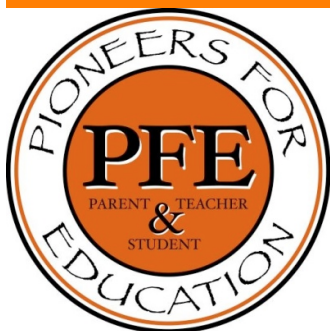
Matt Reichert- President

Chris Roberts- Vice President

Shannon Pokorski- Treasurer

Jami Biodrowski- Secretary

Nicole Duros- Communication Coordinator



**FORT CALHOUN
ELEMENTARY**

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**WE'RE ON THE
WEB!
VISIT OUR
WEBSITE:**

www.fortcalhounschoools.org

REMINDER

**ALL FRIDAYS
DURING THE YEAR
ARE EARLY OUTS.
THE ELEMENTARY
WILL DISMISS
STUDENTS AT
1:15 P.M.**

REMINDER

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

Upcoming events:

May 16: Kindergarten Celebration 1:00 p.m.
-Preschool Celebration 10:00 a.m. & 2 p.m.

May 17: 6th Grade Celebration 9:00 a.m.
-11:15 Dismissal

****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, caring and safe 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!