

Fall Parent Newsletter



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Message from Mr. Wagner

The first quarter is complete! As we move into the second quarter we should pause and highlight the accomplishments up to this point. Now, keep in mind the school year happens in several different phases. However, the first phase of getting the school year kicked off in a positive manner is important to set the tone for the entire school year. We kicked off the school year at a high level. We want to ensure ALL students feel like they can accomplish anything. That starts with knowing all students can learn at their maximal level. Safe to say, with the data collected, we are on the right track to maximize students potential. We aren't just accomplishing this academically. We are accomplishing this emotionally, socially, and behaviorally. Let's dive into how we are accomplishing this. Here we go!

Of course, we start each year out with academic assessments to provide a benchmark for each student. Those assessments include Dibels, MAPS/ NWEA, and NSCAS (3rd -6th state assessment). These assessments provide important data to guide instructional approaches for each staff member. Additionally, the support and instruction are provided from our adopted curriculum that include all four core subjects (Math, English Language Arts, Science and Social Studies). All these programs are aligned to state standards. From those programs we are provided additional data indicators to ensure we are on the right track for each student. The main goal each year is growth! I hope this provided you just a glimpse of all the hard work that each of your children receive here at the FORT. Let's move into the social, emotional, and behavior components.

Like the approach to academics there are adopted programs that provide important data for each student. First, we currently implement the Second Step program for the delivery of the social and emotional learning development. This is delivered by Mrs. Adams (K-5th guidance counselor) and Mrs. Fischer (6th -8th guidance counselor). This is a great program that provides the students social and emotional skills to connect and thrive. Additionally, Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Fischer are here to support students that are in need of just a check in or a pick me up that day. It is vital to provide students these social and emotional skills, but we must also provide other services when students can't or unable to develop these skills. A part of this initiative includes a universal screener for students in 5th and 6th grade. The screener is through FastBridge called mySAEBRS (my Social, Academic, and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener). One of our goals with this is to assist students that may need more additional assistance. We are excited to implement this new screener and see what direction this takes us. Next, more good news here is we have the supports available through proactive thinking and grants that has enable us to currently have two additional therapists through grant work to assist students, when needed. We also have supports outside of school through Arbor Family Counseling. If you are looking for these supports, please contact your classroom teacher, guidance counselors, or myself. We are more than happy to provide you contact information. That is why the services are there, to support students and families.

Lastly, with a lot of hard work and focused initiatives Mr. PJ Mallette is now full time as our Behavior Coordinator. The services that he provides are both proactive and reactive to ensure students are safe and have the skills to cope with others. Mr. Mallette continues to review behavioral data with all staff to ensure there are timely interventions in place to keep all students safe. We are excited about having him full- time with the Behavior Coordinator role to assist with developing those social and emotional skills with all the other resources that are in place. Our hope with all these social, emotional and behavior resources in place will provide students the skills to be productive citizens in our ever-changing society.

As I wrap up my message to you, please take time to process this information and understand that the work we do everyday is setting students up to be their best. We hope every student thrives academically, emotionally, socially, and behaviorally. That hope only goes so far unless we put all of this into action every single day. Rest assure, we are doing that! The positive support you provide the school system matters and we feel it. THANK YOU!

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me. Thank you again for your continued support. We greatly appreciate it!

Go PIONEERS!

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



What's going on in the classrooms?

Early childhood - Mrs. Royuk and Miss Fleischman

Preschoolers had a great beginning to the school year! Since the beginning of the school year, we have been learning the names of our friends, recognizing our name and letters and practicing the classroom expectations. We had a field trip to Super Bee Orchard in September and did a number of apple activities. We are looking forward to a family and fall unit next.

Kindergarten - Ms. Hall, Mrs. Leifeld and Miss Neubaum

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, How Does Your Garden Grow? Trees, Fresh From the Farm

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? What do living things need to grow? How do living things change as they grow? What kinds of things grow on a farm?

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, require, plant, develop, amazing, fresh, delicious

High Frequency Words: I, can, the, we, see, a, like, to, and, go, you, do, my, are, with, he
Letter Identification: Aa-Hh, Ii-Rr, Ss-Zz

Phonics: m, a, s, p, t, i, n, c, o, d, h, e, f, r

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, size words, tree parts, fruits and vegetables.

Comprehension: character setting, events, key details, main idea

Math:

- Math is...
- Numbers to 5
- Numbers to 10
- Sort Classify and Count Objects
- 2-Dimensional Shapes
- Understand Addition
- Understand Subtraction

Social Studies:

- Learning and Working Together
- National and State Symbols
- Work Now and Long Ago

Science

- Pushes and Pulls
- Matter
- Earth's Weather
- Sunlight

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

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 the counting sequence with the focus on number patterns. They have also been working on place value by representing and comparing numbers.

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 world.

2nd grade - Mrs. Hallberg, Miss Coulter and Miss Kaup

Language Arts

- *Comprehension skill - key Details – Characters, Setting, Plot
- *Long Vowel vs. Short Vowels
- *Vocab strategies – finding text evidence, context clues
- *Nouns, proper nouns, plural and singular nouns

Math

- *We have adopted a new math series this year called ReVeal from McGraw Hill. We are learning many new strategies to understand numbers better. So far we have been working on...
- * Number Sense
- *Place-Value to the hundreds place
- *Creating arrays to show repeated addition
- *Comparing 3-digit numbers
- *Basic addition fluency facts

Social Studies

- *Getting to know your family and community

Science

- *Types of Matter and their properties

We have really enjoyed getting to know your students so far this year. Just a reminder that we use SeeSaw as our primary source of communication with you all, so please check that out often! 2nd grade is huge jump in responsibility so keep up the good work holding your students accountable. Remember to continue to read each night, it makes a huge impact!

"Pioneers Are Outstanding in their Fields"

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

Math:

- We can multiply numbers using different strategies
- We can memorize multiplication facts
- We can use rounding to estimate
- We can find the sum
- We can find the difference

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
- We can ask questions while we read

Grammar/Writing:

- We can combine sentences
- We can identify sentences and fragments
- We can identify nouns and verbs
- We can identify subject and predicate

Social Studies:

- We can identify continents
- We can identify oceans

Science:

- We can observe and measure an object's motion
- We can use patterns to predict future motion
- I can explain how balanced and unbalanced forces affect an object's motion



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

August and September have been busy days full of new adventures in fourth grade! Students are adjusting well to the classroom routines, procedures, and are working to do their best.

Language Arts is an adventure of investigating our Reading Wonders series through many genres and comprehension skills. We've been working to improve our writing skills while working diligently on personal narratives.

Our marvelous mathematicians are mastering place value, rounding, comparing and writing numbers in different forms. The students are learning new problem solving techniques, with multi-step word problems with addition and subtraction. We just began our adventure into multiplication and division!

In science, we have investigated how motion and energy are related. These engineers took their knowledge and put it to the test by building a paper roller coaster. We will be exploring human uses of energy next. During Social Studies, our student explorers have worked hard to 'set the stage' for the rest of our Nebraska Adventure.

Stay tuned for more exciting adventures of the fabulous fourth grade Pioneers!

5th grade - Mrs. Romans, Miss Rice and Miss Schmidt

The fifth graders are off to a fabulous start! We have been working hard!

In math we have studied volume, decimal place value, decimal addition & subtraction, and whole number multiplication. Soon we will learn how to multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals. After that, 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 nouns and verbs and how to use them correctly in different tenses. We have been reading expository (informational) text as well as realistic fiction. 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 just finished our early European Explorers unit. We will be learning about the colonies of North America and how our nation was built. We will be examining the effects of important documents, people, and historical events to help us understand how the United States came to be.

We just wrapped up our Science unit on Matter & Changes in Matter. Next we will learn more about Earth's systems (the geosphere, hydrosphere, biosphere, and atmosphere) and how they interact. We will also study human impacts on Earth's systems.

The fifth graders have practiced both informational writing and creative writing. We are learning how to use Google Docs, Google Drive, and Google Slides to create and save our work digitally.

Happy Fall!

6th grade - Mr. Mallette, Mr. Teeter and Mr. PJ Mallette

We are looking forward to Student-Led Conferences so plan on your student attending. We hope this new style of conferences will open the door for you to have some in depth conversations with your student(s) about their learning.

Math is moving into fractions, decimals and percents. During this topic we will be working on converting between fractions, decimals and percents. They can help you calculate discounts and sales tax. You can encourage your student to log into IXL and practice converting between fractions and decimals, as well as, practicing multiplying and dividing.

English Language Arts (ELA): We have been working through our Reading Wonders Curriculum so far this year. Some of the items we have learned about include compound sentences, subjects/predicates, argumentative texts, realistic fiction, and many other items. We have been working on our reading comprehension, finding text evidence, and problem-solving skills as well. I hope the students have been coming home and shared at least one thing they have learned so far in class or shared an activity that we worked on in class. Please continue to encourage your student(s) to read at home not just for school work but also for fun! If they have said that they don't read because they can't find a good book, please send them to me to help direct them to a novel they will hopefully enjoy. Thank you all for what you do for your student and for the support!

Science: We are wrapping up our topic about "Living Things in the Biosphere." In the near future our scientists will be covering "The Cell System." These topics include:

- Structure and Function of Cells
- Cell Structures
- Obtaining and Removing Materials
- Cell Division

Social Studies: We started our learning about map-making and became topographers, dove into the world of archaeology and prehistory, the development of agriculture, and the rise of cities. The students will now be learning about the beginning of civilizations in the ancient world of Mesopotamia.



From the Med Aide's Office: Amy Adams Medical Aide

Hello! My name is Amy Adams. I will be the medical aide this year at Ft. Calhoun Elementary. I am new to this school district but have been a medical aide for 5 years. I live in Omaha with my husband and 4 children. I have 2 children that attend here. I love the community and the school district is absolutely amazing! I want each and every one of the students to feel comfortable and feel welcomed when they visit my office. I look forward to meeting and working with everyone! Please feel free to email me (aadams@ftcpioneers.org) or call me (402-468-5714) with any questions or concerns you may have!

Did you know that coming to school sick can actually impact academic performance? It is okay to stay home and focus on getting better. To return to school, students should be fever free and vomit free for 24 hours without medication. If you are unsure- stay home and contact your child's healthcare provider for guidelines.

From the School Counselor:

We are in our third year of using our Second Step program, and it is going very well! We started the year working on many different life skills ranging from my preschoolers meeting puppets Betty and Fred, my 3rd graders making new networks in their brains, to my 5th graders making personal goals. We are currently in our Emotions units. We are excited to continue guessing feeling based on "clues" and past experiences. We will practice learning coping skills when our feelings (both positive and negative) get too strong.

Mrs. Adams

High Ability Learners (HAL)

The HAL classes began meeting on October 3rd. This year is a transition year for our HAL program and I am excited to be able to work with these students for this year. Classes are meeting as combined grade levels 3/4 and 5/6. They are divided into two distinct subject areas - English/Language Arts (ELA) and Math and each subject area meets every other week. We are currently using the book The Survival Guide for Gifted Kids to talk about our strengths and what it means to be in the HAL program. Looking forward to a great year.



Behavior Interventionist (BI)

New Program: Liveschool

We've adopted a new program called Liveschool in the intermediate grade levels. Staff can electronically give students points when they are meeting our school-wide expectations. Each student also has their own account where they can view a timeline of their behavior. This portion is essential in providing students feedback on when/how they earned merits and demerits. Students can then save their points to buy items from our PBIS store that the PLC then fills orders for. Or students can buy new rewards. These new rewards include Uber requests, lunchroom table reservations, 1/2 homework passes, lunch fast passes, and lunch with Deputy Byelick or Mr. Wagner. These rewards have been extremely motivating for our students and it has created a sense of fun at school!

PBIS Update

We are continuing with our school-wide expectations for ALL STUDENTS. This has been a vital piece to set students up for success during the school day. Students continue to be recognized for meeting expectations through our point system and/or ticket system. We continue to have our PBIS store where students can purchase items. I'm sure a lot of you have had those items come home. This has been motivating for a majority of our students! A new piece that we have added is our PBIS Raffles. We are doing individual prizes, classroom prizes, and a larger school-wide prize. All of these components of our PBIS System are all in place to engage, motivate, and create a sense of fun at school. If you ever have any questions about our processes with behavior please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

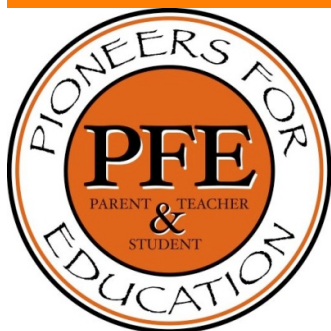
Mr. PJ Mallette

PFE NEWS

Rain or shine, we walked! Thanks to all of our Pioneers and their families/friends for making our Walk-a-Thon fundraiser a success! Thank you to all who donated to support Fort Calhoun Community Schools.

Our membership drive is still open, we appreciate your support of Pioneers For Education (PFE).

The next PFE Meeting will be Monday, October 30th at 7:30pm in the High School Library. We will be discussing and planning for our spring events. We continue to have an open Vice President position, if interested please reach out to pioneersforeducation@gmail.com. Follow Pioneers For Education on Facebook for fun updates, pictures of events, and other exciting news. It's going to be a great school year!



Save the Date:

10/27 - Mornings with Mom

10/30 - PFE Meeting

Your Officer Team,

Chris Roberts - President

Open Position - Vice President

Shannon Pokorski - Treasurer

Jami Biodrowski - Secretary

Amy Evanich - 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:

November 7: Picture Re-take

November 14: Thanksgiving Feast

November 22: Early Dismissal; 1:15 p.m.

November 23 & 24: No School

December 12: Winter Music Program

December 21-29; January 1-3: No School



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!