

SPRING PARENT NEWSLETTER



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

Engaging + Learning + Achieving = Productive PIONEERS!

Greetings Pioneer families! Each school year is special in many ways. The memories that are created and shared with each other are priceless. Providing your student the best experience possible is always a priority. Our hopes each year is when you and/or your student look back on the year it was a positive experience that created opportunities to grow. This school year has brought similar challenges and celebrations. I know this year may have been a bit different for you and your family in many ways. However, through life's adversity we continue to attempt each year to create productive pioneers that are resilient, problem solvers and just outright outstanding human beings. We truly believe that our environment provides a safe learning atmosphere for all students to be successful at a high level throughout our journey. We believe that ALL students can learn and be the best version of themselves. That is what we want to provide our community every single year. We can do this because of your outstanding support and the outstanding staff that work at Fort Calhoun Elementary. Our staff is second to none, especially during one of the hardest times to be in education. Just know that Fort Calhoun Elementary is set up for future success.

Moving forward, I wanted to take time to say farewell! This is my last year at Fort Calhoun. My family and I have been a part of this community for twelve years. In that twelve years the memories that we have created are treasures that we will hold onto tightly. I remember coming to Fort Calhoun and thinking that this is a special place that needed to be found, polished, and displayed for all to see. I believe that gem has been found and it is shining brightly! Continue the awesomeness that you all possess. It has been a fabulous journey. Thank you for your continued support throughout my tenure at the FORT. It is truly a special place to educate your child.

Thank you! Always...GO PIONEERS!

Drew R. Wagner

"Education is for improving the lives of others and for leaving your community and world better than you found it." -Marian Wright Edelman



What's going on in the classrooms?

Early childhood - Mrs. Royuk and Miss Fleischman

As the school year is coming to an end, preschoolers will continue to work on writing their names, counting, identifying letters and numbers. The afternoon class will continue to practice rhyming, ending sounds and writing the letter sounds they hear in words. We will be learning about growing plants, recycling and insects.

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

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:

Addition and Subtraction
Numbers 11-15
Numbers 16-19
3-Dimensional Shapes
Count to 100
Analyze, Compare, and Compose Shapes

Social Studies:

Geography of a Neighborhood
Time and Chronology
Learning about the past

Science

Sunlight Earth's Weather
Needs of living things Environments

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

Reading

The first graders are wrapping up unit 5 in reading! The students have learned r-controlled vowels and variations of diphthong sounds. They are working on their automaticity and expression while reading, as well as identifying the problem and solution and the cause and effect within a story.

Grammar

The students have been practicing adding adverbs and adjectives to their sentences. They are getting better at writing longer, more descriptive stories.

Math

Students have learned the value of the penny, nickel, dime, and quarter as well as how to count them. They have used a number of strategies to subtract tens. Students will practice measuring objects with rulers to the nearest inch.

Science

In first grade we learned about identifying plant parts and explaining how animal parts help animals survive in their habitats. We will explore plants around the school and identify the parts of each plant that we see! We will discuss the life cycles of plants and animals as well.

Social Studies

Students have explored relative and absolute locations as they've analyzed maps. They have identified land and water on a globe and a map, too.

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

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

- *Revolutionary War, Civil War, & Slavery
- *Learning about the US Constitution and Branches of Government

Science

- *Conservation unit about helping endangered and threatened animals in Nebraska.
- *Animal camouflage project

Writing

- *Researching and gathering information to create research reports
- *Using capital letters and punctuation when writing sentences

It's almost the end of the year and 2nd grade has been very busy! We have been doing lots of review of skills we have learned to prepare for NWEA and Dibels testing! Our 2nd grade field trip is coming up shortly and we are excited to explore the Wildlife Safari Park! We are also looking forward to Field Day coming up on May 2nd and hope to see many of you cheering on the kiddos! We thank you for all your support this year and hope you have a wonderful summer!

"Pioneers Are Outstanding in their Fields"

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

- 3rd Grade state assessment, NSCAS, will be given April 23-26.
- 3rd Grade Dibels will be given April 29 – May 3
- 3rd Grade field trip to Gifford Farms is April 30

Math:

- We can memorize our multiplication and division facts
- We can find equivalent fractions
- We can recognize fractions and their value
- *Check with your child to see if they have memorized the multiplication and division facts.

Language Arts:

- We can use context clues to understand meanings of words
- 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 identify the problem and solution in a story
- We can identify the cause and effect in passages and stories
- We can use text features to help us comprehend a story
- We can understand figurative language to help us comprehend
- We can identify verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs

Science:

Solar Eclipse

Social Studies:

Rural

[4th grade - Mrs. Omer, Mrs. Schleifer and Mrs. Jones](#)

It's hard to believe the school year is coming to an end! The 4th graders have been awesome and hard working!

We've been diligently reviewing for NSCAS so we can show off all of our growth. Our outstanding children visited the State Capitol Building, met Senator Hansen and were Curious Curators at the Nebraska State History Museum on April 10th. We will begin working on our Nebraska A-Z books and pioneer wagons soon.

Our mathematicians have mastered geometry and are preparing themselves for 5th grade. In Science we are exploring the different body systems and how they help us stay healthy.

Have a great rest of the year and remember to READ!!!

[5th grade - Mrs. Romans, Miss Rice and Miss Schmidt](#)

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 continue to study folklore genres including fairy tales, folktales, fables, legends, and myths. In writing, we just wrapped up our personal narratives.

In Social Studies, we are learning about Westward Expansion and the Civil War.

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

We are looking forward to our upcoming field trip to Platte River State Park. The students spend all day outside learning about outdoor activities and plants/animals of Nebraska.

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.*

Happy Spring!
Miss Rice, Miss Schmidt, & Mrs. Romans

[6th grade - Mr. Mallette, Mr. Teeter and Mrs. Ryan](#)

As the year winds down please remind your student to finish in a positive upbeat manner. There are several projects and events that will be more fun if everyone is doing the right things. With that being said we look forward to seeing all of you at the end of the year celebration.

Math will be working on geometry and graphs to close out the year. You can encourage your student to log into IXL and practice the recommended skills. Also, IXL will be available for them to practice over the summer. It may be useful to build time into your summer activities to work on IXL to limit the amount of loss in learning that can occur.

English Language Arts (ELA): We have been continuing to work through our Reading Wonders Curriculum so far this year. We are wrapping up our final lesson over Lyric and Ode Poetry. NSCAS and Dibels Testing is right around the corner (April 24 NSCAS ELA & April 29-May 3 Dibels). We will be doing review leading up to our NSCAS testing. To end our ELA year we will be doing a project where students will use the Problem-Solving Process and "persuade" investors to "buy" an invention/innovation they will construct, FCE Shark Tank (more information to come with this)!

In Social Studies we are learning about Ancient Greece. We are currently learning about ancient warfare and the Persian Wars. We will be heading into a really exciting part of history where we will learn about Ancient Greek beliefs and arts. We will also be learning about the Olympic Games!

Energy! In Science we are learning about energy and the many forms it takes. We are currently working on a comic strip about the law of conservation of energy and showing our knowledge of energy and how it is not created nor destroyed but rather transferred or transformed! Next week we will be sending out information on an extra credit opportunity that involves a Rube Goldberg Machine! Our next topic will be thermal energy which will include an ice cream experiment!

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

Hello! My name is Amy Adams. I am the medical aide at Ft. Calhoun Elementary. I have been a medical aide for 5 years. 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. 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.

Medications here at school will need to be picked up by a parent or guardian as I am unable to send them home with students at the end of the year.

FROM THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR-MARIE ADAMS:

We have just completed our last unit- Solving Problems- with the Second Step program. The kids did a great job of saying the problem without blaming, thinking of solutions that were safe, respectful, and kind, and picking the best solution for different situations.

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

High Ability Learners (HAL)

Greetings from HAL!

It's hard to believe that our year is almost over! We've had a great semester. In February all 44 of the HAL students took a field trip to the Kiewit Luminarium. We learned a lot through the hands-on exhibits. We were also able to take a walk over to Iowa on the Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge. As we near the end of the year, ELA HAL students are working on an original story that they will animate using stop motion animation or create a protagonist using TinkerCad. In Math HAL we have been working with Spike Lego education to build and program Lego creations to move!

5/6 grade ELA HAL students are diligently preparing for their Battle of the Books competition on May 6th. Students will use information from 10 books read throughout the year to compete in this project base competition. 5/6 grade Math HAL students are preparing for their Extreme Math competition on May 8th. This competition will include individual and team tasks. Good luck to both groups as they compete!

I've enjoyed working with these students this year looking forward to 2024/25. Have a great summer!

Mrs. Chris Roberts
Interim HAL Coordinator

Behavior Coordinator-PJ MALLETT

Pilot Program: LiveSchool

This year we added pieces to our behavior system to help meet the needs of students. We piloted our LiveSchool program which brought many new things to our students. Some of those new things included rewards, recognition at a higher rate, feedback for students/staff, and non-negotiable's. This program also provided us with information to make data-informed decisions to best support our students and hold them accountable. During this process our LiveSchool team which included 18 adults met several times throughout the year to evaluate the program and help improve it for our system. Way to go school team! This LiveSchool Pilot Program was a HUGE SUCCESS helping engage students and improve behavior.

PBIS Frameworks

Our PBIS frameworks will continue to evolve to meet the needs of our system. We will continue to set students up for success by posting expectations, practicing expectations, and recognizing students for meeting those expectations while holding them accountable when they aren't met.

Partnership

Lastly, I want to personally thank all of the parents who continue to support what we do as educators. The support and understanding that parents have for what we do to help kids be their best does have a MUCH GREATER impact on students when we do it together with respect. So THANK YOU for your partnership this year! Have a great summer.

PFE NEWS

Hard to believe the school year is starting to wind down. In early March PFE sponsored Donuts with Dad in the Elementary school gym. The event, as always, was a huge success and is something the students (and families) look forward to each Spring.

In April PFE sponsored our first Mother/Son kickball tournament. We had gorgeous weather, tons of fun and snacks! Such a great event for our students on the High School football field with their moms! Thank you to our volunteers for making both of these events possible, we could not do it without you! See below for our final few events of the year.



April

4/19 - School Carnival

4/29 - PFE Meeting, 7:30 pm, High School Library

May

5/6 - Staff appreciation week

Summer bridge books delivered

We have already started planning for next year's events and we look forward to sharing these with you when finalized. PFE can be reached at pioneersforeducation@gmail.com. Follow Pioneers For Education on Facebook for fun updates, pictures of events, and other exciting news.

Your Officer Team,

Chris Roberts - President

Open Position - Vice President

Shannon Pokorski - Treasurer

Jami Biodrowski - Secretary

Amy Evanich - Communication Coordinator

FORT
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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:

April 19: Spring Carnival

May 2: Spring Band Concert

May 2: Field Day

May 7: No School

May 9: Talent Show

May 13: Preschool Celebration-Morning session is at 10:00am

*Afternoon Session is at 2:00pm

May 14: Kindergarten Celebration-1:00pm

May 15: Sixth grade Celebration-8:30am

May 15: Last day of school 11:15 dismissal



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!