



### COMMUNITY 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 at the high school office. **The fob renews yearly each June 1st.** If you have any questions contact Jamie Schleifer at 402-468-5591.

## OPTION ENROLLMENT 2025-26

The Option Enrollment application period for the 2025-26 school year opens on September 1, 2025 and runs through March 15, 2026. Forms are available on our website or at the school offices. The School Board set class sizes and program parameters in February. Applicants are taken on a first-come, first-serve basis within the guidelines set by our Board of Education and according to State law. All applicants must be notified one way or the other by April 1st.

The Elementary Supply List is on the schools' website: [fortcalhounschoools.org](http://fortcalhounschoools.org) under "School", "Elementary", "School Supplies" and click where indicated.



Fort Calhoun Community Schools use an automated system to notify families of emergencies or weather-related closings by call, text or e-mail. Make sure all your contact numbers are up-to-date and let us know your preferred way of notification by returning your Student Profiles.



Post-season Baseball awards were announced. **Sam Genoways, Chase Premer, Alex Christensen, Chase Bierman and Levi Lasher** were all selected as All-State Honorable Mention. **Kenny Wellwood** was selected as Class C 1st Team All-State.



**Junior High** - August 4-5 with Mrs. Fischer - call to make an appointment 402-468-5591

**High School** - August 4-5-6 with Mrs. Hernandez - call to make an appointment 402-468-5591

Visit our website at [www.fortcalhounschoools.org](http://www.fortcalhounschoools.org)



Fort Calhoun's Skills USA - formerly known as VICA - has hosted its "famous" barbeque dinner since 1980. It started as the "Pig Feed", moved to "Pig Roast", and in 1987 the name switched to the "Hog and Turkey Roast". 1990 was the first mention of it being the "Hog Roast" and the rest is history. This Fall's spread will celebrate the 45th Annual Hog Roast.

It takes place the afternoon/evening of the Homecoming Football Game on Friday September 19, 2025 in the High School Commons.



# The Fort Dispatch

Volume 35 No 1

Fort Calhoun Community Schools

Back to School 2025

## FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

### Welcome Back to School

On August 14 th we will welcome back over 800 students to Fort Calhoun Community Schools. The first day of school is an exciting time for most students, some just don't like to admit it, but they like it. The staff is always anticipating the first day with students because it brings so much energy into the building. They get to meet their new students and begin the educational process. No matter where you are in your educational journey it is always the mission of the Fort Calhoun Community Schools is to 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.

We understand that every new year brings both excitement and a few nerves—especially for our youngest learners and those transitioning into new schools. As we start this school year, let's remember the importance of kindness, respect, and inclusivity. Our school is a place where everyone should feel safe, valued, and supported. Let's work together to create a community where everyone can thrive, learn, and succeed.

Elementary and Secondary students will be receiving letters from their respective principals along with information regarding athletics and activities from our athletic director, coaches and sponsors. This will contain important information so please take the time to read all the details.

Thank you for being a part of our school community. We look forward to an amazing year filled with growth, learning, and memorable moments. Welcome back and remember, it's up to you, make it great.

Sincerely,

Jerry Green  
Superintendent

The mission of the Fort Calhoun Schools is to:

**F**oster learning in an inspiring, caring and safe environment; provide  
**O**pportunities for all students to be successful; instill the attributes of  
**R**espect and responsibility among staff and students alike; and present students with the  
**T**ools to succeed in life.



DR. NICK WEMHOFF  
Principal

I am thrilled to welcome you back for the 2025–2026 school year! There’s something truly special about the sights and sounds of school—laughter between friends, the focused energy of an engaged classroom, the buzz of students entering the lunchroom, and the energy of Fall sports—shoes squeaking, bats cracking, pads thumping, and fans cheering. These moments, both big and small, are what I have come to deeply cherish about the work I am fortunate to do every day.

As we prepare for a new year, I hope you are as excited as I am. A new school year brings endless possibilities—the chance to build on past successes, the opportunity to start fresh, and the freedom to grow into the person you want to become. I am confident that each of you will find something meaningful this year—something that connects to your passion and purpose. As we get ready to start school, I’d like to share a few wishes I have for you:

May your smiles be bright and your friendships many. A simple smile holds incredible power—share it freely and often. True friendship is one of life’s greatest gifts, offering support, joy, and connection. Sometimes, the most meaningful friendships begin in the most unexpected ways—but only if you’re open to them. Be willing to welcome others in, to extend kindness, and to create space for new connections. Never pass up the chance to invite someone into your circle. You never know the difference it might make—for them, and for you. Be the reason someone feels seen, valued, and encouraged.

May you embrace failure as a stepping stone to success. Let challenges push you, not stop you. Growth often comes through struggle, and it’s in those moments that you discover your true strength. Skills such as time management, perseverance, and finding that “second wind” are all essential to unlocking your full potential. One of the most valuable lessons you can learn as a student is that life will present obstacles—and that’s okay. What matters is how you respond. Never be afraid to ask questions, seek help, and use the resources around you. Success isn’t about doing it alone—it’s about knowing when to reach out and how to move forward.

May you value action over words. As Denzel Washington wisely said, “Words without action are just words.” It’s easy to make promises or speak with good intentions, but true character is revealed in what you do—not just in what you say. Be someone who follows through. Don’t let your commitments fade into the background—see them through to the end. Traits like leadership, loyalty, courage, and optimism only carry weight when they’re demonstrated through consistent action. Strive to be the person others look up to—not because of what you say, but because of the example you set through your everyday actions.

I can’t wait to see all of you back at the FORT. Until then, enjoy every moment of what’s left of your summer. Let’s make this an unforgettable year—together.

“Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.”  
-Arthur Ashe

FORT CALHOUN  
CENSUS INFORMATION

Our community is growing and we want to be prepared. We are contacting families in our District to determine future needs. Please help us with our household information by reporting any adults and children up to 18 years old or if there has been a change in your household, Complete this census card or call the District office at 402-468-5591 with your information.

FORT CALHOUN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS  
DISTRICT CENSUS RECORD

Resident: LastFirstMailing Address:Zip

SpouseResidence Address: (if different)

OccupationHe/SheCountyPhone #

Other Adults Living at Same Address

DateFor Office Use Only:Census ID #

NAME OF CHILD/SOC. SEC. # (Birth to 21 Years)	ID #	SEX M F	DATE OF BIRTH MM/DD/YYYY	PLACE OF BIRTH CITY/STATE

POLICY 3053-NONDISCRIMINATION

The School District does not discriminate on the basis of prohibited factors in employment and educational programs/activities. The School District affirmatively strives to provide equal opportunity for all as required by:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex

Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) as amended - prohibits discrimination on the basis of age with respect to individuals who are at least 40

The Equal Pay Act of 1963 as amended - prohibits sex discrimination in payment of wages to women and men performing substantially equal work in the same establishment

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - prohibits discrimination against the disabled

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) - prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, public service, public accommodations and telecommunications

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) - requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to “eligible” employees for certain family and medical reasons

The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions

The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) – requires covered employers to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified employee’s or applicant’s known limitations related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) – provides job protections and reemployment rights to military reservists and National Guard members called to active duty

The Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act which prohibits discrimination against groups that wish to access district facilities

The Nebraska Fair Employment Practice Act (FEPA) – prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy), disability, marital status, and retaliation

Nebraska Age Discrimination in Employment Act (Age Act) – prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of age for those individuals who are over 40 years of age

The Equal Pay Act of Nebraska – prohibits discriminatory wage practices based on sex

The Nebraska Equal Opportunity in Education Act – prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex (including pregnancy) by any educational institution

Veterans Preference Law (NEB. REV. STAT §§ 48-225 to 48-231) - stipulates categorical preferences for employment for military veterans and for the spouses of disabled veterans

Additional School Board policies prohibit harassment and/or discrimination against students, employees, or patrons on the basis of sex, race, color, ethnic or national origin, religion, marital status, disability, age, pregnancy, and any other legally prohibited basis. Retaliation for engaging in a protected activity is also prohibited.

Any person who believes she or he has been discriminated against, denied a benefit, or excluded from participation in any district education program or activity may file a complaint using the district’s complaint procedures.

Inquiries regarding compliance with any of the laws referred to in this policy may be directed to the superintendent or to the district’s Title IX and/or Section 504/ADA Coordinator.

SCHOOL MEALS

Fort Calhoun Schools serve nutritious meals to students during the school year. If you have already received notification of 2025-26 benefits granted through direct certification, your student(s) will begin receiving them on the first day of school. If you received benefits in 2024-25 those will carryover until September 25, 2025. If you did not, we urge you to complete the necessary paperwork immediately if you believe you qualify. Forms will be sent home the first day of school and can be found on the school website under “Food Service”. Students will have to pay for meals until such time this is received. Benefits are not retroactive. School board policy states “The district’s policy on charged meals is: “If a student has no funds available to pay for a meal, the student will be permitted to charge up to five meals. Thereafter, if a student has no funds available to pay for a meal, no food will be provided.” If you have any questions, please contact the District Office at 402-468-5591.



PRICES FOR 2025-26

ELEMENTARY K-6

Student Breakfast	2.10
Adult Breakfast	3.00
Student Lunch	3.10
Second Lunch	3.10
Milk	0.50
Reduced Breakfast	.30**
Reduced Lunch	.40**
Adult Lunch	4.75

\*\* Required by Federal Legislation

SECONDARY 7-12

Student Breakfast	2.50
Adult Breakfast	3.00
Student Lunch	3.50
Second Lunch	3.50
Milk	0.50
Reduced Breakfast	.30**
Reduced Lunch	.40**
Adult Lunch	4.90



**MR. JAMIE SCHLEIFER**  
**Assistant Principal/AD**

Pioneers,

Welcome back! I hope your summer was restful, energizing, and filled with moments that made you smile. As we gear up for another exciting school year, I wanted to extend a warm welcome to all our students and families—especially those joining our school community for the first time. We’re glad you’re here!

One of the most rewarding parts of my job is watching our student-athletes grow—not just in their sports and activities, but as individuals. If you’re a fan of Ted Lasso (and if you’re not yet, I highly recommend it), you might recall the scene where Ted plays darts and shares a powerful message: *“Be curious, not judgmental.”* It’s a quote I often reflect on when working with our students. It reminds us that we all have the choice to seek understanding before forming opinions or making quick judgments about people or situations. It’s about exploring and learning—rather than rushing to conclusions based on first impressions—and that’s a valuable lesson for all of us.

Now, down to business:

- **Fall Sports Seasons for High School officially begin on August 11.** Whether it’s football, volleyball, cross country, softball, or any other fall sport, we’re excited to see our athletes back in action!
- **All student-athletes must have a current physical on file and a signed NSAA consent form** before they can participate in practices or games. These are non-negotiable for student safety and eligibility, so please make sure they’re completed and submitted on time.
- **Mark your calendars for our Fall Sports Kickoff Event on August 22!** It’s a great opportunity to meet coaches, connect with other families, and show support for our Fall sports programs!

We’re looking forward to a season full of competition, sportsmanship, and school pride. If you have any questions about forms, schedules, or how to get involved, please don’t hesitate to reach out.

Mr. Schleifer  
Assistant Principal/Athletic Director



**ADMISSION PRICES 2025-26\***

Individual Admission Prices – Varsity Home Contests	Individual Admission Prices - JV and Lower
\$5.00 Students K-12	\$4.00 Students K-12
\$7.00 Adults	\$5.00 Adults

\*Pass prices have not increased for 2025-26  
Golden Age Conference Passes are available **FREE OF CHARGE** to any patron over 60 who requests one.

**\*\*\*FORT CALHOUN SEASON PASSES DO NOT INCLUDE ADMISSION TO ANY CONFERENCE, DISTRICT OR STATE CONTEST HELD AT FORT CALHOUN OR THAT FORT CALHOUN MIGHT HOST.**



**Looking to change a life? Teammates may be the place for you.**

**Become a member by going to Teammates.org or call 402-237-9558 for more information.**



Dear Fort Calhoun Elementary Families,

Welcome to a new school year! I hope your summer was filled with joyful memories, rest, and time with loved ones. As we gear up for an exciting year ahead, I’m thrilled to welcome our students and families back to Fort Calhoun Elementary where it’s always a great day to be a Pioneer! This year, our theme is “Shine Bright”—a reminder that every child has their own unique light, and together, we will help them shine. We believe that each student brings their own light to our school community, and it is our mission to help them discover and develop that light. Whether it’s through academics, friendships, creativity, or acts of kindness, we are encouraging our students to shine in ways that make them proud and inspire others. Our staff is committed to creating a positive and uplifting environment where students feel seen, valued, and supported as they work toward their goals. Together, we will face challenges with courage, cheer each other on with heart, and work hard each day to make this school year one where every child truly shines bright.

I’m also excited to share our updated school vision, which reflects who we are and what we stand for: At Fort Calhoun Elementary School, we honor our traditions and build strong relationships with students, families, staff, and the community. We are committed to teaching the whole child through authentic learning experiences that promote academic excellence, well-being, and character. In a safe and supportive environment, students are empowered to be respectful, responsible, and brave. Grounded in a culture of hometown pride, we prepare students for success beyond the classroom and readiness for the real world. We are truly looking forward to partnering with you this year and watching our students grow, achieve, and shine bright! With Pioneer pride,

Mrs. Horstman

*Upcoming Events:*

**AUGUST:**

- 7th** - PFE Summer Pool Party
- 13th** - Back to School Night from 6 - 7 pm
- 14th** - First Day of School - 11:15 Dismissal
- 15th** - PFE Back to School Movie Night
- 18th** - First Day of Preschool
- 22nd** - Fall Sports Kick Off

**SEPTEMBER:**

- 1st** - No School
- 23rd** - Picture Day
- 19th** - Homecoming
- 29th** - No School

**OCTOBER**

- 17th** - End of the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter
- 22nd & 23rd** - Parent Teacher Conferences, 11:15 Dismissal
- 24th** - No School

*Daily Schedule:*

- 7:45 am** - Buses Arrive  
Students Enter School  
Breakfast Begins
- 8:00 am** - School Begins
- 8:05 am** - Students are Tardy
- 10:10 am** - Kindergarten Recess
- 10:45 am** - Kindergarten Lunch  
1st & 2nd Grade Recess
- 11:20 am** - 1st & 2nd Grade Lunch  
3rd & 4th Grade Recess
- 11:55 am** - 3rd & 4th Grade Lunch  
5th & 6th Grade Recess
- 12:30 pm** - 5th & 6th Grade Lunch
- 3:00 pm** - Dismissal on Monday - Thursday
- \*FRIDAY’S DISMISSAL IS AT 1:15 PM**



The first day of preschool will be Monday, August 18th. Morning preschool is from 8:00 am - 11:15 am and afternoon preschool is from 11:50 am - 3:05 pm. In addition to preschool on Monday through Thursday, there will be preschool on the following days:  
●Morning preschool - October 22nd, November 26th, and February 18th, from 8:00am - 11:15am.  
●Afternoon preschool - October 23rd, December 19th, and February 19th from 8:00am - 11:15am.

If you have any further questions regarding preschool, please contact the Fort Calhoun Elementary School Office