

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.



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.



TEAMMATES Fort Calhoun are looking for mentors for 2025-26. This is open to any Fort Calhoun student in grades 3-12. Mentors focus on building friendships with the students during their 30-45 minutes per week they are together. The time provides weekly connections with a caring, trusting adult. Contact Chapter Coordinator, Teri Zavadil at 402-237-9558 or terianne45@gmail.com for more information or to volunteer. You may also visit their website TeamMates.org.



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.



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.

Visit our website at www.fortcalhounschoools.org



The Fort Dispatch

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FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT’S OFFICE

Humble and Hungry

It is hard to believe that we are already three weeks into school. The year moves fast with students and staff keeping busy with several school related items. One principle we are focused on this year is continuous improvement and growth. Humility gives us an opportunity to be open to learning and new ideas. Hunger maintains a relentless desire to work with passion and purpose. As we move forward it is important that all of us remain humble and hungry for achievement, success, and satisfaction in all that we do. As we head into the new year, I would like to share some words from Jon Gordon that motivate me. I wish everyone “humility and hunger” as we work toward our goals.

BE HUNGRY

- Follow your passion, continuously improve, and continue to dream.
- Seek out new ideas, new strategies, and new ways to push yourself out of your comfort zone.
- Invest time, energy, sweat and dedication to be your best.
- Be willing to pay the price that greatness requires. Don’t be average. Strive to be great.
- Become the hardest worker you know.
- Love the process and you’ll love what the process produces.
- * Decide to leave a legacy. Even at a young age it’s important to think about what legacy you want to leave because knowing how you want to be remembered helps you decide how to live today.
- Don’t focus on where you’ve been. Focus on where you are and where you are going.
- Make your life and work a quest for excellence. Every day ask how I can be better today than I was yesterday?
- Make your next work your best work.

-Jon Gordon

Jerry Green
Superintendent
Fort Calhoun Community Schools



The mission of the Fort Calhoun 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.

DR. NICK WEMHOFF
Jr-Sr High Principal

We are already moving into our third full week of school—time is flying! It has been wonderful to see our students working hard and staying engaged each day. As we transition into September, grades are being entered, NWEA testing begins, and both high school and junior high sports are in full swing. Two important events to note in September are the start of Academic Eligibility and our upcoming Homecoming festivities.

Beginning Monday, September 8, academic eligibility will be in effect. Students who are failing one or more classes will be ineligible to compete in any school-sponsored activities. Ineligible students are still expected to attend practices and games; however, they may not leave school early to travel with their team. Once all grades are passing, eligibility is immediately restored.

Open communication between parents and teachers plays a vital role in a student’s success. If you ever have concerns about your child’s grades or progress, please reach out directly to their teacher. Often, a quick conversation can provide clarity, address challenges, and create a plan to support your child both at home and at school. Working together ensures that students receive the encouragement, accountability, and resources they need to stay on track.

Homecoming Week kicks off September 15! The parade and pep rally are scheduled for Friday, September 19, with the parade beginning at 12:30 p.m. on 15th Street, followed immediately by the pep rally at the football field. The Homecoming Dance for grades 9-12 will take place on Saturday, September 20, at the high school. Additional details will be shared with students as we get closer to the date.

“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”
-Eleanor Roosevelt

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.



Happenings

- 9/1 Labor Day - NO SCHOOL
Band @ Septemberfest Parade
- 9/8 School Board Meeting
- 9/19 Homecoming Activities including
Fireworks after Football
Skills USA Hog Roast
- 9/20 Homecoming Dance
Fort Calhoun Foundation-
Pioneers Alumni Annual Golf Tournament
- 9/22 Budget Hearing
Hearing to Set Tax Asking
Special Board Meeting
FCYSO VB Night
- 9/23 Picture Day at all Schools
- 9/29 No School-Fall Break



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 upon certification from the State. If you received benefits in 2024-25 those will carryover only until September 25, 2025. We urge you to complete the necessary paperwork immediately if you believe you qualify for meal benefits.. Forms can be found on the school website under “Food Service”. Benefits are not retroactive and 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,
The Fort Calhoun High School athletic programs would like to invite you and your child(ren) to attend our home events this year. We have more than 40 home varsity events scheduled, and we'd love to fill the stands with enthusiastic fans to support our teams. Our student-athletes have been working hard this summer to prepare for their upcoming seasons.

As a reminder, if you bring your child to a game, you are responsible for their supervision throughout the event. Children should not be left unattended at any time. During indoor events, students are not permitted in the academic areas, the auxiliary gym, or outside of the building without supervision.

At football games, students should not roam in front of the school (west side) or on the northeast hillside. They must remain inside the fenced area on the east side or sit with you in the stands. If your child is found in any of the restricted areas, they will be directed to return to you, and you may receive a call from the administration. Additionally, if your child chooses to leave a football game early, they must exit through the south gate (near the concession stand) and will not be allowed to reenter the facility.

Also, pets are NOT ALLOWED at any home Fort Calhoun Community Schools event, this includes both indoor AND outdoor events at all buildings, with the exception of service animals approved by Fort Calhoun administration.

We are once again offering activity passes for the year. Prices are as follows:
Student (K–12): \$50
Adult: \$70
Family Pass (includes all immediate family members): \$150
Children are included under the family pass until they graduate from college.

I would also like to invite all families to the Homecoming festivities on Friday, September 19th. The parade at 12:30, followed by the pep-rally, the football game at 7pm followed by a professional fireworks show at the conclusion of the game! To stay informed about game schedules and other school events, visit our website at www.ftcpioneers.org and click on the calendar link.

We're excited to kick off another great season of Pioneer athletics and hope to see you and your family in the stands. Thank you for your continued support—and as always, GO PIONEERS!

Jamie Schleifer
Assistant Principal / Athletic Director
Fort Calhoun Community Schools



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.

Dear Fort Calhoun Elementary Families,

It is hard to believe that September is already here! The first few weeks of school have been filled with excitement, energy, and a strong start to the year. Our students are settling into routines, building friendships, and diving into new learning opportunities.

This month, we will continue focusing on our school-wide expectations of being safe, respectful, responsible, and brave. I am so proud of the way our students are already demonstrating these qualities throughout the building, in the classroom, and on the playground.

September also brings several important events and opportunities to stay connected including picture day, PTO meetings, Homecoming, etc.. We love seeing families involved and engaged in our school community. Thank you for your continued support in making Fort Calhoun Elementary such a wonderful place to learn and grow.

~ Mrs. Horstman
Elementary Principal

Before & After School Expectations

Morning Drop Off:
Students arriving at school between 7:45 am - 8:00 am will be supervised by a staff member. Students should not be dropped off prior to 7:45 am. Students can enter the building at 7:45 am and head to the grade level areas or to breakfast to eat if needed. Students are welcome to join walking club with Mrs. Rutledge, Mrs. Connor and Ms. Knorr is available on Tuesday through Thursday. Additionally, Library club is available on Monday through Thursday with Ms. Homolka.

After School Pick Up:
Schools ends at 3:00 pm on Monday through Thursday and 1:15 pm on Fridays. If your after school pick up plans change, please send a SeeSaw message to the student's classroom teacher and email Miss Ruby at rweaver@ftcpioneers.org or call Miss Ruby at 402-468-5714. **PM Preschool** will be dismissed out the preschool doors and can be picked up on 10th Street. **Kindergarten, first grade, second grade, Mrs. Hodson or Miss Knust's classroom** will be dismissed in the front of the school. Parents wishing to remain in their vehicle can use the front pick up lane. **Mrs. Benoit's class, fourth, fifth and sixth grade** will be dismissed in the back of school. Parents wishing to remain in their vehicle should get in line behind the buses. If 4th - 6th grade students and students in Mrs. Benoit's room have younger siblings, they can walk around school (not through school) to the front of the building.

- A Few Reminders:
- All drivers need to follow the rules and pull forward. Pulling forward is the key!
 - Always use the crosswalk.
 - If your child is unable to unbuckle/buckle him/herself, please practice at home. This is a skill he/she needs to be able to do independently.

Student Expectations at Sporting Events

We love having our elementary Pioneers come cheer on our junior and senior high school teams! To make sure everyone has fun and stays safe, students are expected to follow these guidelines:

BE SAFE - **Running around the school, playing tag, or playing games with friends on school property is not allowed.** Please enjoy the game from the stands with your family.

BE RESPECTFUL - Use kind words and actions with other fans, players, referees, and staff. Show your school spirit by cheering for our team, not against the other team.

BE RESPONSIBLE - Take care of school property and throw away your trash.

BE BRAVE - Show bravery by cheering loudly and proudly, standing up for good sportsmanship, and being a positive example for younger Pioneers.



- September 1st - Labor Day
- September 3rd - Summer Bingo Sundaes
- September 10th - Preschool Advisory Meeting
- September 18th - Mid-Quarter
- September 19th - Homecoming
- September 23rd - Elementary Picture Day
- September 29th - No School
- October 3rd - Elementary Walk A Thon
- October 16th - 1st Quarter Celebration
- October 17th - Donuts with Dad

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	