



HAPPENINGS

- 11/1 Daylight Savings Time Ends
- 11/4 Picture Retakes
Jr-Sr High Choir Fall Concert
- 11/7 Teacher Inservice-NO SCHOOL
- 11/10 School Board Meeting
Conference Choir @ Louisville
- 11/11 Skills USA Veterans Day Program
10:00 AM High School Main Gym
- 11/13 Elementary Choir Concert
- 11/14 POPP Lock-In for HS Students
- 11/18-22 American Education Week
- 11/20-22 All State Band and Choir
- 11/24 Conference One-Act Play Contest
- 11/25 One Act @ Midland University
- 11/26 Early Dismissal
- 11/27 **HAPPY THANKSGIVING**
- 11/27-11/30 No School - Thanksgiving Vacation
Offices will be closed
- 12/3 MCC Blood Drive
- 12/4 Elementary Band Concert



OPTION ENROLLMENT 2026-27

The Option Enrollment application period for the 2026-27 school year opened on September 1st 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. Applications are available at the high school office and a fob will be issued for a fee of \$50.00. **The fob renews yearly each June 1st.** If you have any questions contact Jamie Schleifer at 402-468-5591.



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 or contacting your student(s) school.

3057
Title IX Policy

As required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, it is the policy of the district that no person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any of the district's programs or activities, or in regards to admission or employment.

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment. This report must be made by any means to the district's Title IX Coordinator whose contact information can be found on the district's website and in the district's student and staff handbooks. Any other inquiries regarding the application of this policy should be referred to the Title IX Coordinator.

Adopted on: August 10, 2020
Reviewed on: June 13, 2022
Revised on: Revised on June 13, 2022
Reviewed on: July 8, 2024
Revised on: July 8, 2024
Reviewed on: July 14, 2025
Revised on: July 14, 2025

*See also Policy 3053-Non Discrimination

Medical Careers Club and JAG, & POPP (Pioneers Overcoming Peer Pressure) are co-sponsoring a "Winter Gear" Drive.

Donate to our Winter Gear Drive now through October 31st!
Donate new or gently used hats, gloves, mittens, scarves, or socks (new only)

This is our chance to help those experiencing homelessness in the Omaha Area. The items gathered will be donated to support the Salvation Army's Winter Night Watch mobile unit that hands out warm food and clothing to the homeless on the streets during the winter.

The drive runs until October 31st. We will have a collection barrel available beginning next week outside the HS counseling office. We will also have collection points at the fall parent-teacher conferences and some upcoming FCHS athletic events, too.

- * HS Football vs **Concordia** - October 10th
- * JH Volleyball vs **Yutan** - October 12th
- * JV Football vs **Yutan** - October 13th
- * HS Volleyball vs **Logansport** - October 20th

* Parent Teacher Conferences at the HS & the elementary on October 22 & 23

Thank you to all who donated to the Salvation Army "Winter Gear Drive" It was a great success. Our clubs did a great job and so did all of you who donated!



The Fort Dispatch

Volume 36 No 4 Fort Calhoun Community Schools November 2025

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

The Importance of Mental Health for Students, Parents, and Schools

Mental health is just as important as physical health, especially in schools. For students, maintaining good mental health is essential for learning, building relationships, and handling everyday challenges. When students feel anxious, stressed, or depressed, it can affect their ability to concentrate, perform well in class, and enjoy school life. Recognizing and caring for mental health helps students become more confident, motivated, and emotionally strong.

Parents also play a big role in supporting their children's mental well-being. Open communication between parents and teens helps create trust and understanding. When parents listen without judgment and show empathy, it encourages students to share their feelings instead of keeping them bottled up. Parents can also help by setting healthy routines, such as encouraging good sleep, balanced meals, and time for relaxation. By showing that mental health matters, parents teach their children that it's okay to ask for help when things get tough.

Schools also have a responsibility to promote mental wellness. Teachers and counselors can create supportive environments where students feel safe and respected. Mental health programs, awareness campaigns, and counseling services can make a big difference in helping students cope with stress or emotional struggles. When schools prioritize mental health, they not only improve academic performance but also help students develop resilience and empathy, skills that are important for life beyond the classroom.

Mental health should be a shared priority for students, parents, and schools. By working together, they can create a community where everyone feels supported and understood. Taking care of our mental health allows us to reach our full potential and build a happier, healthier future.

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.

Jamie Schleifer
Assistant Principal / AD



It has been a great Fall season, and there has been much to celebrate this year! Below are a few highlights of our Fall sports teams.

Collectively, our Fall sports teams are having the most successful season in recent memory. The Pioneer softball season came to an end in the District Championship when they were defeated by Freeman. We had a lot of representation from the Pioneers on the All Conference teams.

First Team All Conference: Izzy Greenough, Tacey Belina, and Kayla Kratz
All Conference Honorable Mention: Izzy Nolan, Emily Warfield, Lyla Pearson

The Pioneer boys and girls cross country teams qualified for the state meet again this year after finishing first and second at Districts. The football team qualified for the state playoffs for the second consecutive year and is hosting a first round game for the first time since 2012 against Gothenburg. Volleyball started subdistricts on October 27 with a 3 to 0 win over Falls City and then fell to Concordia in game two. The volleyball team finished with an 18 and 13 record, tying the most wins the program has had in the past 20 years.

Great job, Pioneers!

Winter Physical Form Information:

I want to remind parents of students who plan to participate in athletics this winter in grades seven through twelve to submit their physical forms to the main high school office. The sports physical must take place after May 1, 2025, to qualify for the 2025–2026 school year. The specific line we are looking for is “the athlete is cleared without restrictions to participate in athletics.”

The winter sports season is right around the corner. Start dates for junior high and high school are below:

- High School Basketball and Wrestling: Monday, November 17
- Junior High Boys Basketball and Junior High Girls Wrestling: Monday, October 27
- Junior High Girls Basketball: Monday, January 20
- Junior High Wrestling: Monday, January 12
- Winter Sports Parent Meeting: November 16 at 6 p.m. at the high school
- Winter Sports Pictures: November 21

Reminder to Pioneer Fans:

Free live streaming is offered through HUDL. Fans can download the HUDL Fan app or visit hudl.fan.com and search “Fort Calhoun” to find all the events available for livestream.

Fort Calhoun Season Passes are still available at Junior and Senior High games and in the high school office:

- Family: \$150
- Single Adult: \$70
- Student (K through 12): \$50

We appreciate the support from the Fort Calhoun community this Fall, and we are excited for the start of the Winter season. Go Pioneers!

Mr. Schleifer

Golden Age Conference Passes are available **FREE OF CHARGE** to any patron 60 or over who requests one.

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

A Note from the Principal

Dear Fort Calhoun Families,

November is a special time at our school as we focus on gratitude, growth, and connection. We are so thankful for our families’ continued support and partnership. A big thank-you to all parents who attended parent-teacher conferences—your involvement plays an important role in your child’s success. This month, our students are learning about kindness and thankfulness through classroom lessons and activities. We are also preparing for upcoming events like our Thanksgiving Feast, one of our favorite elementary traditions! Such a wonderful time to come together to share a meal, and show our gratitude for the wonderful school family we have at Fort Calhoun Elementary.



As the weather turns colder, please remind your child to bring a warm coat, hat, and gloves for outdoor recess. We’re proud of the progress our students are making and encourage families to keep up great attendance and reading habits at home. Thank you for being such an important part of our school community—we wish all of our families a safe and happy Thanksgiving!

~ Mrs. Horstman
Elementary Principal

Upcoming Elementary Events

- November 4th - Elementary Picture Make-Up Day
- November 7th - No School for Students
- November 13th - Elementary Music Concert 6:00 pm-7:30 pm
- November 18th - Thanksgiving Feast
- November 21st - Little Pioneers Play Group 8:00 am-12:00 pm
- November 26th - Early Dismissal
- November 27th - No School-Offices Closed
- November 28th - No School-Offices Closed



To best support our kitchen staff, and help ensure they are as prepared as possible to feed our school family, we ask that you RSVP with the name of your student(s) and guest name(s). 402-468-5714

You can find the November meal calendar on the website fortcalhounschoools.org, under Calendars, Printable Lunch Calendar

A Few Reminders...

- School begins promptly at 8:00 am. Students who arrive late miss important instruction that sets the tone for their day. Please ensure your child arrives on time so they can start the day prepared and ready to learn.
 - Student Illnesses - To prevent the spread of germs and illness to others, students should be fever free and experience no vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours.
 - Our transportation team would like your help with the corner of 12th and Adams. Please leave plenty of space to ensure the buses can safely make the turn onto Adams St.
- As the fall temperatures get cooler, please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. Layers, jackets, and warm clothing help students stay comfortable during the school day, including outdoor activities and recess.

American Education Week
November 17-21, 2025

Together for Safe, Just & Equitable



DR. NICK WEMHOFF
Principal

I want to extend a heartfelt Thank You to all the students and parents who attended parent-teacher conferences. Open communication between teachers, students, and parents is essential to every student's success. If you were unable to attend conferences, please know that you are always welcome to contact your child's teachers at any time.

If you haven't already, please consider connecting to PowerSchool using your parent access account. If you need login information, contact the Junior High/High School office, we can provide your access code to get started. PowerSchool allows you to view grades, lunch balances, attendance, and other important information, giving you 24/7 insight into your child's academic progress.

I'm often reminded of the saying, "It takes a village to raise a child." Together — parents, friends, school staff, and the community — we form that village. We are proud to walk this journey with our students and their families. Although parent-teacher conferences occur only twice a year, our doors are always open.

If you have a question — ask.
If you need help — ask.
If you need someone to listen — ask.
If you're unsure — ask.

We are here for our students and families. We know that as parents, you do your very best for your child, and it's through our partnership that "The Fort" remains such a special place.

*"No school can work well for children if parents and teachers do not act in partnership on behalf of the children's best interests."
Dorothy Cohen*

Visit us at fortcalhounschoools.org



Feeding the Future with Healthy School Meals

Fort Calhoun Community Schools participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), a federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free meals to children each school day. The program was established under the National School Lunch Act, signed by President Harry Truman in 1946.

Applications for free or reduced meal benefits are available in the schools' offices. When approved, this benefit will cover a **full first meal, either breakfast or lunch**. Any second meals or a la carte items must be purchased at their regular price. Contact the offices if you have any questions or need assistance.

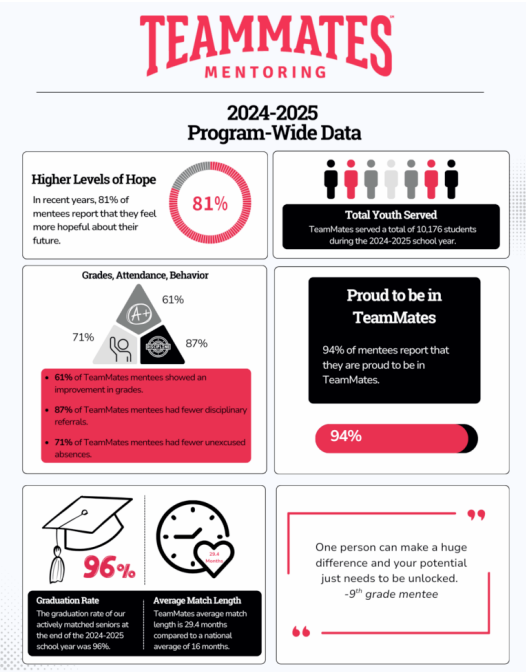


We love having the TeamMates Mentoring Fort Calhoun Chapter at the Fort. The image shows the program's impact on our Mentees' lives. We especially need male mentors.

Please consider becoming a Mentor for the Fort Calhoun Chapter. Go to TeamMates.org and fill out an application.

If you have any questions, please call 877-531-8326 to speak to a member of the Teammates Team or 402-237-9558 to talk to the Fort Calhoun Coordinator, Teri.

Thank you!



**SKILLS USA
VETERANS DAY PROGRAM**

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 11, 2025 10:00 AM
FORT CALHOUN HIGH SCHOOL MAIN GYM

Each veteran and a guest are invited to a luncheon following the program. Please call 402-468-5591 to RSVP for the luncheon.



The **Boys Cross Country Team** with members **Chris Post Whiteowl, Merritt Olberding, Will Dennis, Seth Waters, Sean Waters and Maddox Nelson** is **District Champ** and advanced to State. They took **3rd Place** and **Chris** medalled at 13th. The **Girls Team** with members **Lauren Lammers, Anna McMahon, Raeann Massey, Emily Arens, Bella McLaughlin and Emma Ochoa-Gomez** also qualified for State being the **District Runner-up**. They placed **8th** at State.

Congrats to all on a great season!

Congratulations to all the Softball coaches and girls for their hard work throughout the season. Post season **NCC Conference** selections are **Tacey Belina, Izzy Greenough and Kayla Krantz- First Team**; and **Layla Pearson, Emily Warfield and Izzy Nolan Honorable Mention**.

Fort Calhoun's **eSports Team** competed at the Omaha Concordia High School Tournament. **Trevor DeVries-1st Place** and **Hawthorne Roehr placed 2nd!**

Erika BenSalah, Emma Bowery, Alex Fienhold, Connor Holmstedt, Natalie Lammers, Layla Steiner and Stella Wilmes auditioned and were accepted to participate in the **Midland University Honor Choir**.

Connor Holmstedt was selected through audition to play clarinet in the **All State Orchestra**.