

Fort Calhoun Community Schools  
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Fort Calhoun, Nebraska 68023

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May love and laughter light your days, and warm your heart and home.  
May peace and plenty bless your world wherever you may roam.

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March 2019

**FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT’S OFFICE**

**“IT’S PILING UP”**

I struggled coming up with a title for this March article and then I looked outside and at my desk and the title “Its Piling Up” seemed like a good idea. We are within about six inches of having the most snow since the 60’s for February. This winter has been a tough one so far and we are exhausting the days I set aside for snow days. The pile on my desk is a combination of paperwork for upcoming evaluations, and annual state visits and federal reports required of all public schools. While all of this is manageable it can certainly seem very daunting.

All the public school districts across the state are in the same boat that we are. They are all wondering when the winter will end and when will the weather people finally get it right? The Fort Calhoun Schools has built four snow days into our calendar -- February 20th was our 4th. While this is a little alarming we are still within the hour parameter required by the State. Now if we were to get a few more we would have to start looking at making up some time. We are fortunate that we have our short Fridays and Easter Monday to still play with. If this weather continues and it is necessary to cancel additional school days the administration will put together a plan to make up the required time.

Another thing that seems to be piling up is the start of the student assessment period. Over the next several months our students will be taking both state and federally required assessments. Our teachers do an outstanding job of balancing those assessments and the time they spend in their continued efforts to teach and take care of kids. Our students are very resilient during this time and handle all of these additional assessments in stride, but is still a stressful time for the schools.

Last but certainly not least our students have a pile of activities and events going on this time of year. We are not only finishing up the Winter sports season but we have started competitions in events like Show Choir and Quiz Bowl. This is also the time for our more musically talented students to be participating in Honor Bands and Choirs. The 2018-19 school year has been a very impressive year for the number of students participating in these Honor Bands and Choirs. My hat goes off to all those kids who are involved in a ton of these events all at the same time. I am very proud of them!

In conclusion, I would challenge you to come out and watch our kids perform; it is awesome and they represent our community in a tremendous fashion.

Have a great month and God Bless,

Dr. Johnson  
Superintendent of Schools



**Nate Bonacci, Aaron Johnson, Savannah Lukasiewicz and Avery McKennan** all were selected by audition for the Nebraska Wesleyan Honor Band.

From over 3,800 entries and only 34% of those receiving recognition, 13 Fort Calhoun Art students received 29 awards in the Scholastic State Art Awards Competition. Those receiving awards were **Katie Barta 2\***, **Cory Underwood\*\*\***, **Cameron Reynolds\*\*\***, **Kennedy Bradburn\***, **Bailey Donovan \* \*\***, **Evelyn Holmstedt \*\***, **Alyssa Mitchell \*\***, **Nathan Blizzard \* 3\*\* \*\*\***, **Emelia Finke 2\*\*\***, **Espen Hervik \*\*\***, **Avery McKennan 3\* 3\*\* \*\*\***, **Stephanie Mlynarik 2\*\* \*\*\***, and **Nate Premier \*\***. Their works are on display at the TAC Center of the Omaha Public Schools on 30th & Cuming Streets.

\*=Gold Key; \*\*=Silver Key, \*\*\*=Honorable Mention

**Aaron Swanson** qualified for Swimming Regionals in Minneapolis for his 50m Freestyle time.

**WELCOME TO FORT CALHOUN**

Our community is growing and we want to be prepared. We are continuously counting students in our District to determine future needs.

**Residents:** Please help us with our child count by reporting your children up to 18 years old, especially those who intend to be enrolled in Fort Calhoun Schools for next school year. If you have not already notified us through the census or there has been a change in your household, call the District office at 402-468-5591 with your information.

Thank You!

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

**OPTION ENROLLMENT**

Our Board of Education set the class sizes and program parameters at their February 2019 meeting. The application period is still open now through 3/15/19. Call if you have any questions. 402-468-5591

# Resilience and Grit: How to Develop a Growth Mindset

By Tamara Lechner

The ability to bounce back from adversity and keep going when things get tough are just two of the traits of highly successful individuals. These traits are more commonly known as grit and resilience.

### Grit vs. Resilience

According to Angela Duckworth, a researcher and MacArthur Fellowship winner who has a TED talk on grit with just over 8 million views, grit is “perseverance and passion for long-term goals.”

Duckworth’s research has evolved around discovering why some individuals—given the same talent, intelligence, and resources—accomplish more than other individuals. In attempting to define the essence of grit, she has discovered that grit can be related to how much you can inspire yourself, access your passion, and sustain your motivation.

How is this different than resilience? Resilience involves the ability to get back up when you’ve been knocked down or to come back fighting stronger after a loss.

The subtle differentiating factor of these two deeply entwined character traits seems to be that resilience is the optimism to continue when times are tough and you’ve experienced some failures, when others see continuing as futile or impossible. **Grit** is the drive that keeps you on a difficult task over a sustained period of time.

### A Growth Mindset

Is the amount of grit and resilience something that you’re born with and limited to, or are these resources that you can deplete and expand by your habits and choices?

Carol Dweck studies growth mindset and the work she’s done has shown that you can change your mindset, which would also be relevant to changing your grit. Dweck has researched tenacity and its effects on achievement, especially in an educational setting, and she has discovered the following factors that affect the ongoing tenacity or grit of students:

- o Their beliefs about themselves
- o Their goals
- o Their feelings about their social connectedness
- o Their self-regulatory skills

When students have a growth mindset (this is a mindset that will perceive a challenge as an opportunity to learn rather than an obstacle to overcome), they respond with constructive thoughts and their behavior shows persistence rather than defeat-edness.

### Mindfulness and Resilience

According to new research out of India, mindfulness actually breeds resilience. In a study featuring 327 undergrads who completed a series of surveys measuring their level of mindfulness, their satisfaction with life, their emotional state, and their level of resilience, individuals with higher mindfulness levels had greater resilience thereby increasing their life satisfaction.

### 5 Quick Tips to Develop Grit and Resilience

#### 1. Focus on Your Language Choice

The language you use when praising a co-worker, child, or spouse affects grit and resilience. When you praise someone for a characteristic or strength, (for example, “You are really smart. You are so flexible.”), it teaches a fixed mindset. This is why so many successful children struggle once they come across a challenge. Praising for effort or strategy fosters resilience and reminds them of their role in a successful outcome.

#### 2. Surround Yourself with Positive People

Your thoughts become your reality, and so do the thoughts and actions of the people around you. While you can’t pick and choose every single person you interact with on a daily basis, you can be intentional about those you spend time with. By creating an environment where positive thinking and growth mindset are the norm, you will begin to see everything in your life as supporting you rather than thwarting you.



- 3/6 End of 3rd Quarter
- 3/7 Teacher Inservice--NO SCHOOL
- 3/8 NO SCHOOL-Spring Break
- 3/11 School Board Meeting
- 3/16-17 Prom/Post Prom
- 3/18 Jr-Sr High School Science Fair
- 3/20 Booster Club Meeting
- 3/30-31 Band Variety Show & Dinner



Our Roundup again this year is a 2-day affair: April 5th and 12th. Watch for information to come in the mail. If you’re new to the district or don’t get information, contact the Elementary Office at 402-468-5714.



•PFE kicked off February with Donuts with Dad where families who donated germ-fighting items to the elementary school were entered into a drawing for a give-away that included Pioneer gear, treats,

gift certificates and more. Ian Zuhlke was our winner! Thank you to Cortney Raether, donut events chair, for incorporating new ideas this year to make this even more fun for Calhoun families.

•PFE again welcomed Artist in Residence to the elementary school. Artists Julie Noyes and Tom Marshall assisted grades PK-6 to create two 4 x 5 mosaics. The artwork depicts a Pioneer and portrait collage promoting diversity. A grant provided by the Nebraska Art Council funded half of the project. The PFE is again sponsoring Original Works, giving your student a chance to showcase their artwork on a variety of items such as magnets, t-shirts, coffee mugs and more. Artwork and ordering information will be sent home with your student. These make for great gifts as you look ahead to the spring and summer months.

•Upcoming volunteer opportunities include the PFE night at the Fish Fry on March 22 and the Spring Carnival on April 5. Watch the Thursday folders, email and social media for more information. PFE supports the schools through these great events with the help of our volunteers.

•PFE conducted its first online survey, asking members for input on a much-discussed electric marquee sign. The people have spoken, and it does not appear to be the best use of funds. More on this topic at our March meeting.

•Interested in a Pioneer PopSocket for your phone? For only \$10, you can support PFE and show off your Pioneer pride! Pioneer PopSockets can be purchased by completing the order form found on the school website under PFE forms tab.

•Join us for our next meeting on Tuesday, March 12 at 6:30 p.m. in the high school commons area.



The mission of the Fort Calhoun Community Schools is to Foster learning in an inspiing and caring 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.



Fort Calhoun Community Schools use an automated calling system to notify families of emergencies or weather-related closings. Make sure all your contact numbers are up-to-date by calling your child’s respective schools.



## -Elementary News-

**Your Principal: Drew R. Wagner**

**Engaging + Learning + Achieving = Productive PIONEERS!**

March events are here! This is another active month around the elementary building. Here are the events in no particular order; Kindergarten Round Up, Preschool Registration, Morning with Mom, Book Fair, Dr. Seuss Week, Fremont Crisis Center presentations, Talent Show, School Carnival and Classroom Field Trips. I would like to elaborate on a few of these events in more detail. Let's do it!

First item of discussion is Kindergarten Round Up. We will continue with the two-day format. This format has been productive for staff and students. Providing this time with the staff is vital in classroom placement for the 2019-20 school year. The dates of this event are April 5 and 12. Information will be coming home from the office on particular details of these two days. If you do not receive a letter explaining Kindergarten Round Up and you feel there was a mistake please contact the office. Thank you!

Next item of discussion is Preschool Registration. The enrollment date is March 18 through April 18. Please go to our website to register your student. On the right hand side you will find preschool registration information with the document to sign up your student. Please fill out the document completely and turn into the office. This link will not be active until the enrollment date opens. If you have questions please feel free to call.

Other items of discussion that were identified in the beginning of this article are enhancing our students' experiences at the FORT some way or another. We not only provide a top-notch education, but we also exhaust several other resources to ensure students' are exposed to extracurricular activities. Each month we take pride in this exposure. Please if you have questions or need more information on anything don't hesitate to ask. We are in this TOGETHER!

THANK YOU all for your continuous support of your child's education and letting us assist!

Be thankful, stay positive, and encourage a growth mindset. Take care! Go PIONEERS!

Respectfully,  
Drew R. Wagner

### **Upcoming events:**

February 25-28: Book Fair

March 1: Morning with Mom sponsored by our PFE

March 4-6: Dr. Seuss Week

March 7 and 8: No School

March 15: Pioneer Play Group (Preschool Event)

March 18: Preschool Registration Opens

March 20 and 21: Fremont Crisis Center presentations to classrooms

March 28: Talent Show

April 5: School Carnival sponsored by our PFE

April 5 and 12: Kindergarten Round Up

## Resilience . . . continued

### **3. Adopt Flexible Thinking Patterns**

Becoming less rigid in your thoughts and actions allows resilience and grit to blossom simply because flexible people don't see problems; they see opportunities for growth and learning. When every challenge is met with creative thinking, you see yourself as capable and this confidence breeds more resilience.

### **4. Set Goals That Align with Your Purpose**

People with a sense of purpose are happier. Purpose can seem like a hard-to-define goal. By creating smaller goals along the pathway to your larger purpose, you increase your success and the rate in which you accomplish your goals.

### **5. Build Time into Your Day for Reflection**

When you take a time to reflect, you bring awareness to the things you have accomplished and the path you want to take. Whether your reflection takes the form of a meditation, a journaling session, or a walk outside, when you give yourself time to assess your accomplishments in a non-judgmental day, it allows you to adjust your actions accordingly.

Like most valuable skills, resilience and grit take practice. However, the work is well worth your effort because fostering these mindset-expanding traits will have a positive impact on every aspect of your life.

Mr. Jerry Green  
Secondary Principal

### **Pick Up/Drop Off Reminder**

Hello everyone, I hope your new year is off to a great start. I wanted to share some information regarding our Pick Up and Drop Off procedures.

All students should be dropped off in the west parking lot and enter through the front doors. That's the easy part.

Picking up students has a few more details. Picking up students during the school day should always be done in the west parking lot as they exit the front doors from the office.

At the end of the school day all students who are being picked up will exit the South Doors to the south parking lot. This requires two very important pieces of information.

1. Please pull all the way up in the pickup lane so cars don't get stacked up behind you.

2. If vehicles do get backed up PLEASE pull into the parking lot and park so vehicles are not stopped on Lincoln St.

Students can easily walk out to your vehicle. We have had complaints about traffic being stopped on Lincoln St. There is plenty of room in the parking lot for all the vehicles.

I would like to thank you in advance for your help with this.

Nick Wemhoff  
Assistant Principal, AD

One thing that we are constantly trying to instill in our students is the ability to be great leaders. Our world is in need of people to step up in tough times and lead with optimism, enthusiasm and positive energy. Leadership is not just about what you do but what you can inspire, encourage and empower others to do.

Two ideals that will help you become a good leader:

People follow the leader first and the leader's vision second. It doesn't matter if the leader shares a powerful vision, if the leader is not someone who people will follow the vision will never be realized. As a leader, who you are makes a difference. The most important message you can share is yourself.

Great leaders know that success is a process not a destination. John Wooden, the legendary UCLA basketball coach, never focused on winning. He knew that winning was the by-product of great leadership, teamwork, focus, commitment and execution of the fundamentals. As a leader, focus on your people and process, not the outcome.

*I believe you become great when you help others become great.*  
Jon Gordon

*(both ideals were taken from an article written by Jon Gordon.)*