

April 2017

Superintendent's News

Hard to believe that we are wrapping up the school year and in less than 8 weeks we will be out for summer break. During the next few weeks please pay close attention to our school website along with the school calendar as we have several events and or activities planned for the months of April and May.

All students in grades 3-11 will be taking the NeSA (Nebraska State Assessments) during the month of April. Please take time to encourage your child to do their best. Hay Springs Public Schools has gained an outstanding reputation of performing at high levels on State Assessments. I have no doubt that this tradition will continue. I would like to thank the parents, students, and staff members for their dedication and effort in preparing for state assessments this year!

I would like to introduce Hay Springs Public School Superintendent/Principal for the 2017-2018 School Year, Mr. Russell Lechtenberg. Mr. Lechtenberg will be taking over duties as Superintendent/Principal on July 1, 2017. Please take time to read the article that is attached about Mr. Lechtenberg.

Superintendent/Principal

Mr. Russell Lechtenberg

I was born and raised at Butte, located in Boyd County in north central Nebraska. I was one of seven children raised on a livestock and crop farm where the family raised Registered Hereford cattle for many years. My siblings and I all graduated from UNL. I married my high school sweetheart and have been married for forty-five years. We have been blessed with eight children, six sons and two daughters, seven of whom have graduated from UNL. Our youngest daughter is currently a junior at UNK. Upon my graduation from UNL with a B.S. in Animal Science and Agricultural Education I taught one year at Elgin Public School before returning to farm and ranch with my father. I had enjoyed that year of teaching but had always wanted to return to the farm, so when the opportunity to do so was available I returned home. I continue to have crop and livestock interest in farming in Boyd County where two of our sons and a son-in-law are involved in the farming operation. In 2002 we also planted a small vineyard which

continues in operation today. So I have a vested interest and love for rural Nebraska communities and the quality of life growing up in small towns provides our youth. I strongly believe in raising children in rural communities where they learn the value of hard work. Rural communities value quality education and provide students tremendous advantages in their future. During my seventh year at home there was an Agricultural Science opening in Spencer Public School. I was approached about the position and after considering it, I assumed the position for several years before taking the same position at Butte Public School. During my time in Butte the two schools formed a Unified District and as I pursued my Educational Leadership and Specialists degrees from Wayne State College, efforts were being made to reorganize the district. As the reorganization took place I assumed the role as Principal and then for the past ten years have served the district as the Superintendent/Principal. West Boyd School is a consolidation of Spencer, Spencer-Naper, and Butte. It consists of a PreK-4th elementary building in the community of Butte and a 5th-12th middle and high school building in the Spencer community. I retired in July of 2016 and have loved retirement and time with my grandchildren but have never lost the desire to continue to be involved in education. I was impressed with the community members, teaching staff and Board of Education members I met with and was pleased to receive the offer to come to Hay Springs. I am excited about the position and look forward to working with the staff and the Board of Education at Hay Springs School in providing quality educational opportunities for our students.



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In an effort to support continuous improvement in education at Hay Springs, we ask the community for their input on Hay Springs Public Schools. We are asking all students, parents, and community citizens to complete a short survey located on our website (www.hshawks.com). Thank you in advance for your participation.

Quiz Bowl

By Carole Matthews



Hay Springs Quiz Bowl competed at the Chadron MS Meet on Wednesday, March 22. This is the first year we have entered an eighth grade team with all eighth graders and a seventh grade team of all seventh graders. The teams were small in numbers but mighty in ability and desire.

The eighth grade placed fourth with 245 points behind host Chadron, Sidney and Alliance. The seventh grade placed second just five points behind Sidney. Other teams at the event were Crawford, Gerding, Gordon-Rushville, and Morrill.

Things are looking good for Quiz Bowl at Hay Springs. We look forward to next year when the eighth graders will join the high school team who finished tied for second and fourth at the recent Panco meet. The seventh graders, of course, will be looking for eager sixth graders to join the team. We are also looking at adding more events, including hosting an event at Hay Springs.

NOTICE: Prom is scheduled for April 29th. This is a reminder to parents and students that only students in grades 9-12 are eligible to attend prom. In addition 9th & 10th grade students must be eligible the week of April 24th in order to attend prom.

Jump Rope for Heart

By Mrs. Mandelko



This year our 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students raised \$1,452! I would like to thank everyone that participated in raising donations and all who donated money toward the American Heart Association. Thank you

Book Fair

By Carole Matthews

A big Thank You to all who purchased books at the Spring Book Fair. Your purchases enabled us to add over thirty books to the school collection.

Remember you are your child's first reading teacher. Read with your children and to your children.



Assessment News

By Kim Marx

For teachers, thoughts of spring bring with them thoughts of testing. While testing does take time from classroom instruction, it can also be a valuable tool for teachers and parents. It allows them to see student progress, strengths, and weaknesses. It also helps teachers make instructional decisions for individual students and the whole class. Besides, it's required by law whether we like it or not.

Students in grades 2-11 took the NWEA MAPS assessments in March. These are computerized assessments in reading, math, language, and science. Teachers should have shared the available results at Parent Teacher Conferences. First grade and Kindergarten students will be taking the MAPS assessment the beginning of May.

The legislature also requires that we give a state test in the areas of reading, math, and science. The reading test (NeSA-R) is required for students in grades 3 through 8. It tests vocabulary and comprehension and is an on-line assessment. This is a two-day test, which included writing. We are planning to begin with NeSA testing the week of April 3rd. Students will also be taking the state math test (NeSA-M) and the state science test (NeSA-S). You will receive results from all of these tests in the fall.

Juniors no longer have to take the NeSA assessments. They will now take the ACT test, including the writing portion. This test will be given to all 3rd year high school students on April 19th.

Elementary students were benchmarked this fall and winter using AIMSweb fluency & comprehension. They will be benchmarked for spring before school is out.

Your child's teacher should notify them of an impending test. You can help your child by remembering it is important for him/her to get a good night's sleep before testing and to eat a good breakfast. Also remind your child that these tests are important and encourage him/her to do their best. If you have any questions about these or other assessments, please talk with your child's teacher or contact Mrs. Marx at the school. She would be happy to answer any questions you have.

"Give Back to the Community Day"

By Ms. Kudrna

Thank You

In appreciation for the support of our community, the 6th-12th grade students at HSPS would like to "give back" to Hay Springs. We are seeking businesses, groups, organizations, and even the elderly who are in need of help. Teacher supervised groups of students are willing to wash windows, stock shelves, clean shops, rake lawns, and paint walls. We are willing to assist in any way needed.

Our "Give Back to the Community Day" is scheduled for April 12th, 2017, from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. In the event of inclement weather, April 26, will be the alternate date. If you would like to be added to our list of have any questions, please call the high school office at 308-638-4434.

Thanks to our community for all your support!

Prom 2017

By Mrs. Marx

The 2017 Prom will be held in the auditorium on April 29th. The Grand March will be held in the auditorium beginning at 8:30. The doors will open to the public at 8:15 p.m. to attend the Grand March and parent dance ONLY. All public, including parents, are asked to leave immediately following the parent dance so that the students can enjoy spending the evening with their classmates and friends.



Hay Springs Schools would like to give a big THANK YOU to the community for all the continued support! We appreciate all you do for our school!!



Find us on
Facebook

JH Track Preview

By Coach Bert Newman

We are very excited about our junior high track Program this year! There are 23 students out and they are all very excited for the season. The team's primary values are fitness, team work, citizenship, integrity, and excellence. I (Burt Newman) am blessed to have an awesome team of coaches helping me make these values shown this season. Our wonderful coaching team consists of Jim Varvel (Assistant Coach), Mariah Nelson (Throwing Coach), And Channing Jons (Jumping Coach). Our team is very young, so we spend a lot of time teaching fundamentals. Our first of six track meets will be on Tuesday April 4th. With such a large team we will be filling many events and have multiple relay teams. You may see the students doing different events at different meets through out the year as they learn the various track opportunities. Check out the school calendar for dates of all of the meets and come out to see us compete!

HS Track Preview

By Coach Wegesser

The 2017 Hay Springs Hawks track season has started! The team competed at the CSC Indoor meet and the Morrill Early Bird meet recently. We look to be on track for another good season! New comers Coy Wolken and Maveric Waquitz will add depth to our Boys team. Coy was part of our 4x800 relay team that medaled and placed 5th at the Morrill Early Bird meet. Austin Anderson, Kaelob Marx and Trent Reed were the remaining legs on that team. We are looking for exciting finishes from Kaelob Marx and Trent Reed in the sprints and hurdles this season. Austin Anderson looks to be stronger than last year in the 800, and should do well against the competition. Thomas Scherbarth returns in the shot and discus, and has already thrown further than last season in both. We look for Thomas to make a run at state this year. On the girls side, we are a little thin, but competitive. We have two returning athletes in Jessica Badje and Rebekah Holtmeier. Rebekah will strive to improve on her shot and disc throws this season and take a run at state qualifying. Jessica Badje has started the season out with a bang! Her times in the 1 and 2 mile are already ahead of last years pace. Jessica finished 5th in the 2 mile and 13th in the 1 mile at the state meet last year, on her way to setting a new school record of 12: in the 2 mile.

This season, the team is fortunate to have Payton Schoenhals as our manager. Payton has been keeping our computerized end of the team updated. She provides support to both the team and coaches during workouts and is a wiz with her laptop!

Coaches Josh Borm and Hans Wegesser are excited about the team this year! "We may be small, but we will make some noise".

Music Notes

Raime Varvel



PANCO Music contest results Congratulations to the 7th-12th grade music students for receiving runner-up at PANCO music contest! The following students were recognized for outstanding performances: Samantha Kearns-trumpet solo; Thomas Scherbarth-tuba solo; Hannah Wohl-trumpet solo; Jessi Badje-flute solo; Joce Varvel-piano solo; Payton Schoenhals-vocal solo; Payton Schoenhals & Jessi Badje-vocal duet; Jace Langford, Gabe Varvel, Garrett Glines & Joce Varvel-brass instrumental ensemble. The HS choir was recognized as the outstanding choir; consisting of Sydney Tlustos, Brandy Running Hawk, Payton Schoenhals, Nathan Tobiasson, Alexis Olson & Jessi Badje.

4th & 5th graders have begun work on their Spring Musical **GO WEST!** Each student received a CD with all the music, please make sure they are practicing these songs at home! Speaking parts have also been assigned, please make sure your students are memorizing their lines!

Spring Concert & Contest dates have been set. Please add the following dates to your calendars!

Tuesday, April 11th 7pm ML/HS Pre-Contest concert & Recital-ML/HS

Thursday, April 13th 6:30pm Elders Wisdom-1st, 2nd & 3rd Grade

Tuesday, April 18th ALL DAY District Music contest in Alliance

Tuesday, May 9th 7pm 4th-6th Grade Spring Concert

Tuesday, May 23rd TBA Kindergarten Graduation

Thursday, May 25th TBA End of the Year Talent Show K-11th grade

Like our facebook page at **HS Hawks Music Notes** to keep up with what's going on in the music room.

Congratulations to these amazing, hard-working students!



The Hawk Shop still has clothing for sale if you are in need of some school spirit!!

4H

By Melissa Mracek

Livestock Quality Assurance

The Livestock Quality Assurance is in the process of switching to a new system. When that happens the discounted price of \$5 will disappear and it will become \$12. If you have not been able to complete your Livestock Quality Assurance, you can participate in the in person training on Friday, April 14th starting at 9 am in the Nebraska Extension Sheridan County Office. It will last for 2 hours. Please contact the Nebraska Extension Sheridan County office to RSVP by April 12th. Livestock Quality Assurance must be completed by any 4-H member taking a livestock project including rabbits and poultry.

April Clover Buds

Clover Buds is a free program for youth ages 5 to 7 years old to develop life skills. In April participants will learn about how to properly care for their pets and animal diets. Hay Springs participants will meet on April 20 at the Hay Springs School cafeteria from 4 to 5 pm. Please contact Melissa Mracek at (308) 327-2312 or mmracek2@unl.edu if you have questions about the Clover Buds program.

LOG N 4-H Camp

Nebraska Extension in the Panhandle is launching a special, area-wide 4-H group in the Panhandle and north-central Nebraska to help members in grades 7 and 8 develop leadership skills while meeting other 4-Hers throughout the region.

The group is known as Leadership Opportunities for Growth in Nebraska 4-H (LOG N 4-H). The camp for this group will be held on May 30-31 at the state 4-H camp at Halsey, where members will work together to conquer canoeing, overcome the high wires on the TRUST course, learn about their leadership skills, zip down the zipline, and create a project to better their community.

The cost to attend is \$50, and applications are due by May 1. To apply, contact Melissa Mracek at the Ne-

braska Extension - Sheridan County office.

Scholarships may be available for applicants who need them, through local 4-H councils. Following the camp the members will meet three times to plan their service project activity.

Wilderness Wonders Camp

Wilderness Wonders camp is a great first overnight camp for youth in grades 3rd through 5th for Fall 2017. The camp takes place at Camp Norwesca. This year youth will learn more about bugs while experiencing the great outdoors. Space is limited so please pre-register by May 24th by contacting Leah Gremm at 308-432-3373.

Sheep and Goat Weigh-in

The Sheridan County 4-H Sheep and Goat Weigh-in will be held on Sunday, May 21st from 1 to 2:30 pm at the Sheridan County Fairgrounds. If you cannot attend this weigh you may attend the Sheep and Goat Weigh-ins in Dawes County or Box Butte County. The Box Butte County Weigh-in will be held on Thursday May 18th from 5:30 to 6:30 pm in Hemingford. The Dawes County Weigh-in will be held on Tuesday, May 30th from 3 to 5 pm in Chadron.

Save the Dates

May 30-31 - LOG N Camp
 June 2-3 - Wilderness Wonders Camp
 June 4 - Green Valley Showmanship Day
 June 5 - Jump into Summer
 June 6 - State 4-H Camp in Hemingford
 June 8-10 - Fort Robinson Horse Camp
 June 11 - Sheridan County Progress Show
 June 12 - Pre-District Horse Show
 June 13-14 - Design Camp
 June 15-16 - Art Camp
 June 22 - Tractor Safety
 June 25-27 - PASE & Life Challenge
 July 6 - Robotics workshop
 July 10 - Clover Bud Cooking



2017 Year-end

Talent Show

Who: Kindergarten-11th graders

What: Share your talent with Hay Springs

Perform a solo, lip sync a song, dance, gymnastics, magic show, stand up comedy act, karate, break dance, perform a skit; jump rope...

When: Thursday, May 25 (in the afternoon)

Where: Hay Springs Auditorium

Why: To recognize all the amazing talents we have in Hay Springs & to celebrate the end of another successful year!

Any staff or students interested in participating, please let
Mrs. Varvel know by Monday, April 24th.

*Please note that ALL performances must be G rated, meaning appropriate for viewing of all students preschool-11th grade.

Golf Preview

By Jason Badje



It's all about quality, not quantity right? This year the Hawks will be sporting two fine senior athletes as the representative golf team. 4th year golfer and two-time state qualifier Drew Letcher, will be joined by Senior and first year golfer Kobe Encinia.

Drew will be looking for some redemption after narrowly missing a third straight appearance at state last year. While Kobe has mostly been a recreational golfer, he is no stranger to competitive sports and is an exceptional athlete. Kobe will have to knock off some rough edges, but hopefully the learning curve will be steep early so that he can be competitive through the middle and end of season.

Weather cooperating, we will continue to get in some good practices before the opening meet in Bayard on April 4th. Everyone wants to hit the long ball, but we will be working on the short game a little more intensively this year, where most of the strokes are gained or lost.

Both athletes have great attitudes and practice well. Golf is a tough sport to excel at, and attitude is key. If you see the boys, ask them how they're doing, and encourage them as they strive to do their best and represent their home town Hawks.

EducationQuest Foundation College Planning Bulletin

A monthly college planning guide for Nebraska high school students

April 2017

Seniors...Important FAFSA information for you and your parents

The IRS recently took down its Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) due to security concerns. The DRT allows students and parents to transfer income tax information into the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

If you already filed your 2017-18 FAFSA and used the DRT to input your tax information, this outage should not affect you.

If you and your parents have **NOT** completed your 2017-18 FAFSA, follow these steps:

Complete the FAFSA at fafsa.gov. If you get an error message when you try IRS Data Retrieval ("page not found" or "access denied"), manually input your 2015 tax data.

[Request an official tax return transcript](#) of your 2015 income tax data from the IRS. You will need the transcript if the college(s) you list on the FAFSA request verification of your tax data.

1. Respond to verification requests as soon as possible and send all requested documents to the college. Colleges will not award financial aid until the verification process is complete.

For free help with the FAFSA or verification process, contact EducationQuest to make an appointment. See locations and phone numbers at the bottom of this bulletin. You may also submit questions via [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). We will quickly respond!

College fairs happening across the state

Talk to representatives from colleges across the state, region, and nation during upcoming college fairs.

Juniors...these events will help you narrow your college choices before taking the ACT this spring and applying for college and financial aid early in the fall.

Seniors...attend if you haven't made your final college decision.

April "To Do" List

Seniors

- ☐ Continue applying for [scholarships](#).
- ☐ Make your final college decision.
- ☐ Start purchasing dorm essentials now to avoid sticker shock in August.
- ☐ Start looking for a summer job.

Juniors

- ☐ Attend a [college fair](#) in your area.
- ☐ Schedule [campus visits](#) while colleges are still in session.
- ☐ [Register](#) by April 7 for the May 6 SAT.
- ☐ [Register](#) by May 5 for the June 10 ACT.
- ☐ Start looking for [scholarships](#).

Kindergarten Round-up and Preschool Open house will be May 4, 2017

Incoming Kindergarten students will join Mrs. Mintken from 3:00-4:00. A parent open house will follow.



Preschool open house will be held from 4:15-5:15.

Kindergarten students need to be 5 before July 31, 2017

Kindergarten Entry Forms: Copy of Certified Birth Certificate, Copy of Social Security card, current eye exam, current Kindergarten physical and updated immunizations.

Preschool students need to be 3 before July 31, 2017

Preschool Entry Forms: Current immunizations, Copy of Certified Birth Certificate

Call 638-4434 if you have any questions if you need more information.

Elders' Wisdom 2017

A HAY SPRINGS, NEBRASKA
COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

This Year's Honorees :

Pat Dorshorst

&

Pat Dorshorst

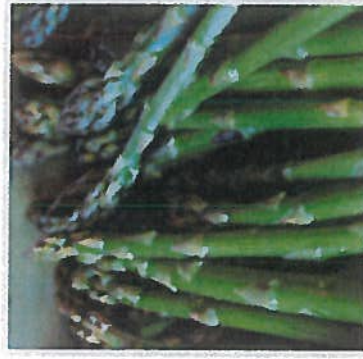
(2 Different People)

THURSDAY
APRIL *13th*

**PROGRAM IN OLD
AUDITORIUM IN HIGH
SCHOOL-6:30PM**

COFFEE AND DESSERT IN CAFETERIA

APRIL 2017



Hay Springs School Cafeteria

- *Breakfast menus
- *PK - 12 Lunch Menus
- *All menus are served with milk. Water is available in the lunchroom area.
- *Garden Bar is offered daily unless posted.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Menus are subject to change	Lunch menu choices available each day are: PBJ/Box Meal/Pizza					1
2	3 Breakfast: Pastries/Cereal Milk Lunch: Sloppy Joes/Mini Corn Dogs	4 Breakfast: French Toast Lunch: Chicken Fajitas/Chicken Nuggets	5 Breakfast: Sliders/muffins/Fruit Milk Lunch: Hoagies/chips	6 Breakfast: Pancakes, Eggs, Applesauce, Lunch: Pizza, Corn	7	8
9 Breakfasts include: cereals/and cereal bars/ yogurt/cheese sticks/fruits/100% juice and Milk	10 Breakfast: Breakfast Pizza Lunch: Cheeseburger Casserole, Cookies	11 Breakfast: French Toast Stix, Applesauce Lunch: Spaghetti/Garlic bread	12 Breakfast: egg n cheese Mini Sandwich/Cereal Lunch: Chicken Nuggets /Chicken Strips/ Mashed potatoes	13 Pancake on a Stick, Lunch: BBQ Pork Sandwich/Mini Corn Dogs, Baked Beans	14	15
16 Fruit and Veggie bar is available each school day	17 Breakfast: Sausage/Muffin Lunch: Tator Tot Casserole/Rolls	18 Breakfast: Pancakes. Lunch: Hamburgers/Chicken Patty, Fries	19 Breakfast: Egg, Muffin Lunch: Chicken Noodle over Mashed Potatoes, Dessert Fathers Day	20 Breakfast: Blisuits N Gravy Lunch: Mandarin Orange Chicken/PBJ/Yogurt Meal	21	22
23	24 Breakfast: Cinnamon Roll, Omelettes Lunch: Burritos/Chicken Queso	25 Breakfast: Waffles/Dutch Waffles Lunch: Cavatini, Bread Sticks	26 Breakfast: Blisuit N Gravy Lunch: Meaty Nachos/Churros	27 Breakfast: Egg w/ Cheese, Peaches, Muffin Lunch: Chicken Alfredo, Green Beans	28	29
30	NOTES: Choice of 1% white Milk, Skim Chocolate or Strawberry Milk served Daily. 100% Juices are served daily					

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The Middle School Quiz Bowl team: Joce Varvel, Bailey Scherbarth, Hannah Wohl, Spencer Kadlecek, Gabe Varvel, Logan Decoste, Sam Hindman, Jazzy Smith, Laney Smith, and Ashley Tobiasson

Kaelob Marx and Hunter Letcher competed for the Panco All Conference Quiz Bowl team and both made the team.

The Café'teria will be hosting a special day each month. On this day, students are encouraged to invite someone to eat lunch with them. Adult Lunch is \$3.50 which includes the meal and unlimited Fruit & Vegetable Bar.



**April's Special Day is
Father's Day Lunch
Invite Your Dad
To Lunch.
On April 19th.**

PreK Lunch—12:00 noon
Elementary Lunch—11:30 a.m.
Middle/High School Lunch—12:25 p.m.

BUILDING READERS®

How Families Can Help Children Become Better Readers

Hay Springs Public Schools

Everyday activities offer engaging opportunities for reading

Rather than force your child to read in his free time, incorporate reading into some of his favorite activities. For example:

- **Visit local sites of interest**, then read a book about area history to find out more. What additional information can your child learn about your town?

- **Talk about foods you love.** What would be fun to make? Let your child pick a recipe from a cook-book to follow together.

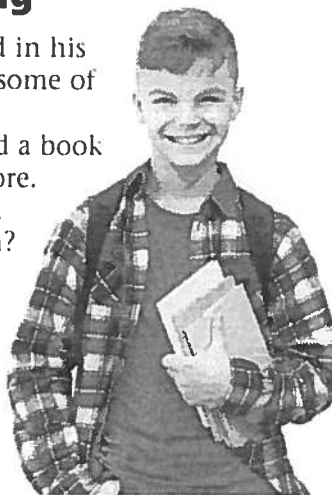
- **Watch or play sports together.**

Then visit the library together to find books about famous athletes, statistics and training tips.

Go for a walk and bring a nature guide.

How many flowers, animals, bugs or trees can you both identify?

- **Start a craft project that requires following instructions.** Let your child read the directions and take charge of the craft.



"If one cannot enjoy reading a book over and over again, there is no use in reading it at all."

—Oscar Wilde

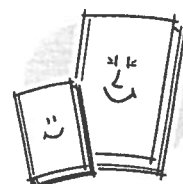
Use journals to encourage creativity

Keeping a journal is a great way to build reading and writing skills. There are lots of ways to journal. If your child doesn't know what to write, give her a notebook and suggest she try:

- **Drawing.** Many kids enjoy sketching things they see or imagine. Suggest that your child add stories or simple captions to accompany her drawings.
- **Reviewing.** What does your child think of books that she reads? What would she recommend to others? Why?
- **Recording.** Your child might like to keep track of the weather, books she reads or facts she collects. Show enthusiasm about what she writes.
- **Creating memories.** Let your child glue favorite pictures and mementos into the notebook—complete with her notes about them. This will be fun to read and remember in the future!

Improve your child's reading skills by reading aloud

Even if your child is able to read on his own, he will still benefit from being read to. When you read to your child, you can:



- **Build enthusiasm** for the story you're reading.
- **Expose him** to new words.
- **Learn more** about his interests.

Source: C. Matthiessen, "The hidden benefits of reading aloud—even for older kids," Great Schools, nswc.com/why_read_aloud.

Help your child practice for spelling tests

You can increase your child's odds of spelling test success by helping him prepare. When practicing, say each spelling word aloud in a sentence, then encourage your child to imagine the word before writing it down. You can also give practice tests in the same format as his real tests.



Context helps give words meaning

When your child gets stuck on a word while reading, show her how to figure out the word on her own. Suggest that she:

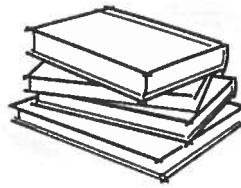
- **Sound it out.** Often, kids succeed when they tackle words sound by sound.
- **Finish the sentence.** She can look for clues about the confusing word in the rest of the sentence, then try reading it again.
- **Notice pictures.** Do they give hints about the story?



Source: J. Zorfass and T. Gray, "Using Context Clues to Understand Word Meanings," Reading Rockets, nswc.com/context_vocabulary.

Use textbooks to entertain as well as educate

Does your child think textbooks are boring? Do you? This fun activity might change your opinion. Ask your child to name his favorite subject in school. Then look with him at one of the books he uses in that class. Next:



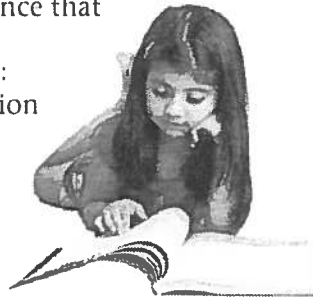
- **Flip through the book** and stop somewhere interesting. Or open to a random page and see what you find. Look at pictures and headings. What do they make you and your child wonder about?
- **Read with your child to satisfy his curiosity.** He can read aloud or you can take turns reading. If he gets bored, switch to a different section and read about a topic that he finds more interesting.
- **Ask each other questions** about what you've read. This will help your child grasp important concepts. Show enthusiasm for the material. This will entice your child to want to learn more.

Dictionary games build language skills

To build your child's vocabulary, have some fun with the dictionary. Use a dictionary that is appropriate for your child's age. Start by making sure your child understands how a dictionary works. Show how the entry word is in bold letters. It's followed by one or more definitions and perhaps a sentence that includes the word.

Then, take turns leading these games:

- **What's the Word?** Read just the definition of a word. Have the other player or players try several times to guess the word. If no one can guess, then tell the word.
- **Guess the Definition.** Find an unusual word in the dictionary. Say the word. Then read its definition and the definition of another word. Ask the players to guess which is the correct definition for the word you read.



Source: P. Kaye, *Games with Books: 28 of the Best Children's Books and How To Use Them To Help Your Child Learn—From Preschool to Third Grade*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Study illustrations and graphics to enhance reading comprehension

To help your child understand what she reads, talk about elements that add to the information in the text. Notice how pictures clarify what she reads. For example, ask, "Why do you think that girl looks sad?" "Why did the author include this chart?"



For lower elementary readers:

- **The Library Gingerbread Man** by Dotti Enderle (Upstart Books). The Gingerbread Man runs away from his home at the library, causing the librarian and several book characters to chase after him!
- **Chowder** by Peter Brown (Little, Brown and Company). Chowder is an unusual dog with unusual owners. But when he meets the animals at a petting zoo, he strives to fit in with them.



For upper elementary readers:

- **A Movie in My Pillow: Una película en mi almohada** by Jorge Argueta (Children's Book Press). This collection of poetry is the poet's reflection on his life after he moved from El Salvador to San Francisco.
- **When Mischievous Came to Town** by Katrina Nannestad (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt). Inge travels to live with her grandmother in Denmark, where she must adjust to stark differences in life.



Q: My child has to take notes from a book for a research project. How can I help with this?

A: Discuss how the book is organized. Your child's notes should be organized in a similar way. To show him exactly how this works, look at a chapter or section together. What is the main idea? Have your child write it down. Then notice the supporting details that follow. Your child can summarize them briefly in his own words.

Do you have a question about reading? Email readingadvisor@parent-institute.com.

Building Readers®

How Families Can Help Children Become Better Readers

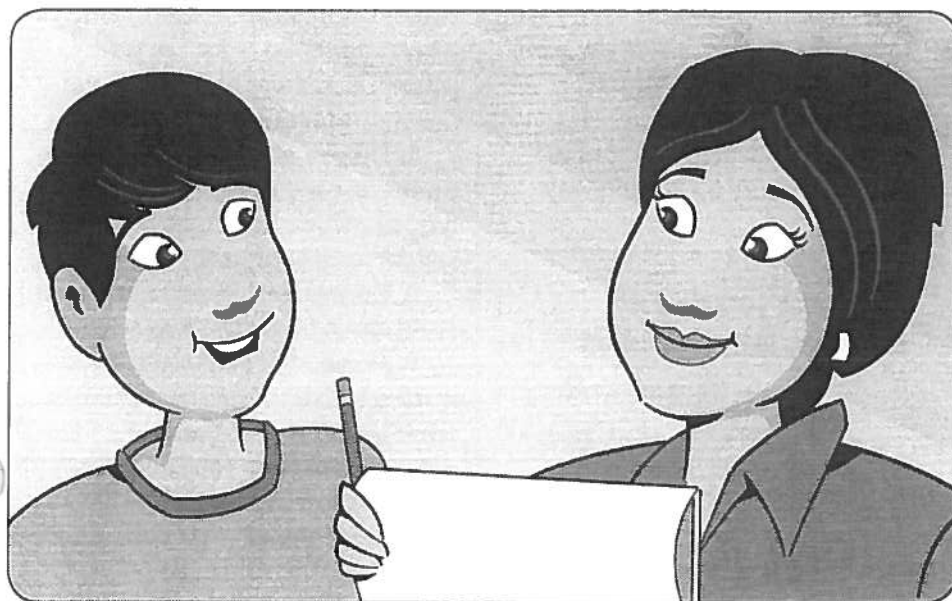
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Elementary School Parents

Hay Springs Public Schools

make the difference!



Regular review helps your child strengthen math skills

Success in math is built on mastering basic skills. Your child's chances of acing more math tests can improve if you do these things:

- **Regularly quiz your child** on basic math facts: 2×9 , $12 - 4$, $6 + 6$, etc. Together, make a set of flash cards with the math facts he needs to know. Use them to quiz him—at the breakfast table, in the car or while you wait at the doctor's office. Your child has mastered a math fact when he can give the correct answer in less than three seconds.
- **Resist telling your child** the answers. He will learn better if you show him how to find them instead. For instance, if he doesn't know what 3×5 is, have him draw three parallel horizontal lines. Cross them with five vertical lines. Then have him count the intersections to get the answer.
- **Have your child practice** writing numbers neatly. One quarter of the math errors students make are due to messy number writing. Your child should make sure his numbers are neatly lined up, too.
- **Encourage your child** to work more problems than the teacher assigns. Good math skills come with practice.
- **Challenge your child** to do math "in his head." See if he can figure out a problem without using pencil and paper or a calculator.

Give your child practice making decisions



The best way to learn how to make good decisions is by making lots of them. So give your child as

many opportunities as you can to make choices.

Young children can decide which healthy items to pack in their lunch, for example. Older children can make decisions about more significant things.

Of course, you must still set the boundaries. Your child can decide whether to do her science or her social studies homework first, but she can't decide to watch TV before she starts her homework.

Gradually give your child more freedom to make decisions. Keep in mind that children don't always connect outcomes with the choices they have made, so help your child think about the consequences of her decisions.

If she makes a poor decision, sit down and talk about what worked and what didn't. Ask, "What would you do differently next time?" The next time she has to make a decision, she will be able to draw on what she learned.

Discover ways to build family time into your daily schedule



To reach their full potential in school and in life, kids need frequent, meaningful, undivided attention from parents. But finding quality time to spend together can be challenging.

Here are some ways to build more family time into your busy schedule:

- **Turn off the TV.** Simply limiting TV time can result in several hours of free time each week.
- **Volunteer.** If your child is involved in a club, team or other group activity, offer to help out. This is a great opportunity to spend time together.
- **Get moving.** It's important to squeeze exercise into your

routine. Be active as a family—go for walks, play tag or kick a soccer ball.

- **Write it on the calendar.** Treat family time like an appointment. If you can, schedule some one-on-one activities that appeal to each child.
- **Gather for dinner.** Sit-down meals help kids and parents connect and can lead to great conversations. Strive to have at least one family meal every day.

"Nothing you do for children is ever wasted."

—Garrison Keillor

Celebrate the month of April with these fun learning activities



April may bring showers—but it also brings many days of learning opportunities.

Here are some fun things you can plan to do with your child:

- **April 2** is International Children's Book Day and Hans Christian Andersen's birthday. This day is designed to inspire a love of reading. Head to the library and grab some books!
- **April 13** is the birthday of Thomas Jefferson. Go online to learn more about this president. Take a virtual tour of his home Monticello at explorer.monticello.org.
- **April 17** is income tax deadline day. Talk about the purpose of taxes. Practice calculating percentages with your child.
- **April 22** is Earth Day. As a family, think of something you can do to protect the earth. Perhaps you could plant a tree or set up a recycling station at home.
- **April 23** is the day Shakespeare's birthday is celebrated. Ask your child to write a scene for a play and act it out with friends or family members.
- **April 26** is the birthday of John James Audubon, who was known for his studies, drawings and paintings of North American birds. Encourage your child to draw pictures of the birds she sees.
- **April 30** is International Jazz Day. Find a radio station that plays jazz and listen to it with your child. Then each of you can describe how the music makes you feel.

How well are you listening to your child?



Communication between you and your child is very important. You want him to know that he can talk to you

about school problems or difficult situations he may be facing. But when your child talks, are you really listening? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below to find out:

1. Do you give your child some uninterrupted listening time every day, like when he comes home from school or at bedtime?
2. Do you avoid interrupting your child when he is speaking to you?
3. Do you tell your child if you are unable to listen that you want to hear what he has to say, then set a time when he can have your full attention?
4. Do you ask questions if you don't understand what your child is saying?
5. Do you sometimes rephrase what your child has said to make sure you understand?

How well are you doing?

If most of your answers are *yes*, you have strong listening skills. For *no* answers, try those ideas.

Elementary School
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make the difference!

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Read aloud to build your child's listening skills and memory



Even if your child knows how to read, it's helpful for you to continue reading aloud to him.

Reading aloud gives your child important quality time with you—and it exposes him to ideas, concepts and vocabulary he might not get otherwise. Each time you read together, you add to his storehouse of knowledge and strengthen his reading comprehension skills.

To boost your child's vocabulary skills as you read, define words he doesn't know. Then ask if he can think of words that have a similar or opposite meaning.

From time to time, see if your child can figure out the meaning of an unknown word by how it's used in a sentence. Give examples of how the word might be used in other

contexts. For example, note how the word *sign* can be a noun (Look at the stop *sign*) or a verb (Please *sign* your name here).

As you read, you can also help your child strengthen other skills, such as:

- **Listening and speaking.** After you've read a passage, have your child tell you what he heard. Ask specific questions—What did ... do? Why? Where ... ? How ... ? What color was ... ?
- **Memory.** Don't just start reading where you left off in a book the night before. First ask your child to recall where you were in the story.
- **Word recognition.** Stop reading periodically. Ask your child to read a sentence or two to you. Help him sound out new words. Then have him read the sentences again.

Everyone wins when parents volunteer and get involved!



Have you ever thought about volunteering at school? National Volunteer Week, which begins April 23, is the perfect time to give it a try.

Here are five reasons to get involved:

1. **Your child will benefit.** Even if you're not in his classroom, your child will know you're at school. He'll feel important and he'll know you think learning is important, too.
2. **You'll get to know** your child's teachers and other school staff. That makes it easier to ask for help when your child needs it.
3. **The school will benefit.** Whether you read to a class, help in the cafeteria or tutor students in the library, you'll be freeing school staff to spend more time with kids who need it. And that leads to more learning.
4. **Volunteering is easy.** Many schools offer training to volunteers. And there are volunteer jobs that can be done at home, at night or on weekends. So every parent can get involved.
5. **Volunteering is fun.** You'll meet other parents in your neighborhood. You may learn new skills. And you'll get a good feeling from knowing you've done something worthwhile.

Q: My eight-year-old daughter has tantrums when she gets angry or frustrated. She's acting the same way in school, and her teacher has asked for my help in getting her to control herself. What can I do?

Questions & Answers

A: Elementary-age children have more stress in their lives than most parents realize. When they don't have the skills to cope with stress, they may resort to toddler-style outbursts and crying fits.

However, your daughter's success in school and with other children depends on her learning how to control her behavior.

To minimize temper tantrums, first try to figure out what triggers them. Keep a record of your child's behavior for one week. What happens just before a tantrum begins? Do you notice patterns? Then, help her avoid some of the situations that lead to stress.

Next, give your child tools to manage her behavior. When she has a meltdown at home, suggest that she:

- **Take time out.** Have her remove herself from the situation for a five-minute breather. Let her return when she feels composed enough to talk calmly.
- **Use calming techniques.** Teach her to breathe deeply, while slowly counting to 10. Have her dribble a ball, pet an animal, or tell herself, "I can work through this."
- **Throw it out.** Have her write or draw her angry feelings on paper. Then have her wad the paper up and toss it away.
- **Talk it out.** Help your child become more self-aware. Note when she's having a bad day. Help her name her feelings.

It Matters: Motivation

Encouragement is more effective than praise



Most parents praise their children with phrases like "Great job!" and "That looks amazing!" But experts

agree that *encouragement* has a bigger effect than *praise* on a child's motivation. So what is the difference between the two?

Praise:

- **Discusses results.** "Great job on the science quiz! You got an A!"
- **Uses opinion words** such as *good*, *great*, *terrific* and *wonderful*.
- **Is typically given** when your child has performed as you had hoped she would.

Encouragement:

- **Notifies effort and progress.** "Look at that project! I can tell you've spent a lot of time on it! It must feel good to know you worked so hard!"
- **Uses descriptive words.** "You picked up your room without being asked. Look at that *clean* floor and *organized* desk!"
- **Can be given** regardless of your child's performance. "That didn't work out the way you planned, did it? I can tell you're disappointed, but I know you'll try again next week. What do you think you might do differently next time?"

The big difference is that words of praise lead your child to rely on *your* assessment of her accomplishments, while words of encouragement lead her to form her *own* positive assessment of herself. Encouragement makes motivation soar!

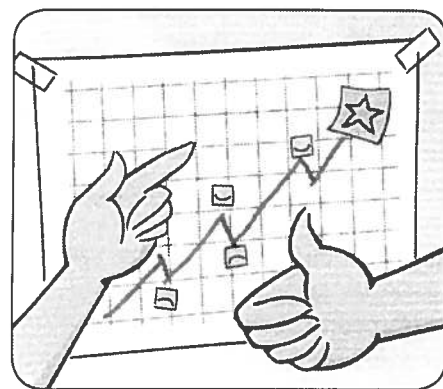
Motivate your child to achieve by setting high expectations

Expect your child to succeed, and her chances for success improve greatly. Expect her to come up short, and the odds are that she will.

Children are usually keenly aware of how their parents view them, and they often tailor their actions to those views. So it's very important to have high expectations—and to express them to your child.

To set effective expectations:

- **Make sure what you expect** is within your child's abilities. If you set expectations that are either too high or too low, your child may do poorly.
- **Let your child know** what you expect of her. Make a list of expectations. Cover places and situations such as home, school, homework, etc.



- **Be consistent.** Don't lower your expectations to make your child happy. Don't raise them because you had a rough day.
- **Set your child up for success.** Give her the ways and means to meet your expectations. For example, provide a well-lit study space and necessary school supplies.

Five strategies can increase your child's motivation to learn



Kids who are motivated to learn are likely to be more successful in school than those who are not.

To motivate your child:

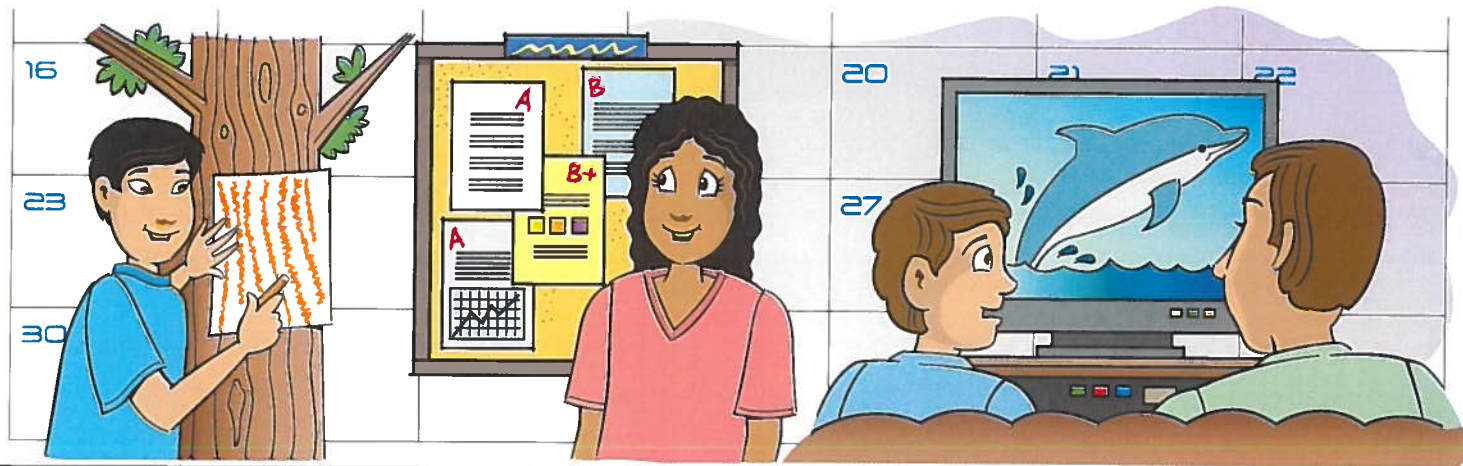
1. **Be a learner yourself.** Let your child see you read books. Watch educational programs. Attend school functions. Try new things. Show curiosity.
2. **Share what you learn.** Talk about new ideas or scientific discoveries with your child. Discuss things you read or hear.

3. **Show an interest** in what he is learning. Ask questions simply to learn and share—not to check up on your child.
4. **Let him know** you believe he can learn. If you show faith in your child's ability to learn, he will have more confidence in his ability.
5. **Stay positive.** If your child has problems in school, help him see that problems can be solved. Meet with the teacher to figure out ways your child can improve. Then discuss ways you can work together to help him succeed.

Parent & Child Activity Calendar

Elementary School

Hay Springs Public Schools



THE
PARENT
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Parent & Child Activity Calendar

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
April 2017						1 Plan to get some exercise with your child every day this month.
2 Use a permanent marker to mark off inches on the side of a jar. Set the jar outside. See how many inches of rain fall this week.	3 Make a crossword puzzle with your child to review spelling words.	4 Have your child rank homework assignments from easiest to hardest. Encourage her to do the hardest one first.	5 Have your child draw a picture of something that happened in school today. Then talk about it.	6 Write a note to your child to tell him you love him. Put it in a place where only he will find it.	7 Read three poems with your child today.	8 Have everyone in the family spend a half hour picking up the house. Many hands make light work.
9 Cook breakfast with your child for the rest of the family. Or invite friends over!	10 Watch the news with your child. Choose a person of the week and read more about that person.	11 Ask your child to name something she has done in her life that she is proud of.	12 With your child, learn how to count to 10 in at least three different languages.	13 Create a word search. Hide words in a grid and surround them with random letters. Let your child find the words.	14 Set aside time every day for reading aloud. Sometimes, let your child read to you.	15 Ask your child to help you organize something, such as a closet.
16 Have your child set a weekly goal. Write it down. Could you do this, too?	17 Watch the news with your child. Choose one story and compare it with an article on the same topic.	18 Give your child a small plant to take care of. Put him in charge of the watering schedule.	19 Ask your child to teach you something she needs to learn for homework. It's a great way to reinforce learning.	20 Have a Geography Challenge. Name a state, province or country. Who can call out the capital first?	21 Let your child stay up 30 minutes past his regular bedtime. The catch? He must use that time to read in bed!	22 Take the whole family to the library and be sure everyone checks out some books.
23 Sing your child's favorite song together.	24 Talk about the best and the worst parts of your day. Everyone gets a turn to talk.	25 Look over your child's homework. Give specific compliments and offer constructive criticism.	26 Play a game of charades with your child. Use hand gestures and motions to describe your word.	27 Read a story to your child and use a different voice for each character.	28 Tonight, take a walk with your child. See how many stars you can see.	29 Set aside some time to spend one-on-one with your child today.
30 Play board or card games as a family tonight.						