

Superintendent's News



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*Christmas Dinner is
December 20th*

Merry Christmas



I have to start my December note with a Congratulations to the Hawk Football team members and coaches! It is a great accomplishment to compete at the state championship level in any activity. I want to also thank our staff and the entire community for the support they have given our Hawks football team. The support of a small community is always amazing, and greatly appreciated. I know there was disappointment in the loss but the Hawks played hard until the end and should be proud of their accomplishment as state runner-up. It has been exciting following this team through the playoff season.

As important as inter and extra-curricular activities are for the development of our youth, the number one reason we are here is for the academic growth of our students. In an effort to enhance academic performance and our school improvement process I had the opportunity to attend the Nebraska Association of School Boards and the Nebraska Association of School Administrators joint Annual State Educational Conference in La Vista Nebraska. On Wednesday I attended a workshop on "Partnering for a Stronger American Workforce". This session was centered on preparing students for **H3** jobs which includes preparing students for jobs that are **H-High Demand**, **H-High**

Wages, and **H-High Skills** requirements. The presentation included a cooperative effort in which several schools in an area worked with each other and the area community college to develop a Joint Public Agency which allowed them to collaborate to meet the Career and Technology Education needs of area students. The NDE Skills USA state officers also presented a brief program on the advantages of student career education leadership organizations at the high school level. Keynote speakers covered topics ranging from, embracing our challenges, the value of saying "Thank You and meaning it", and discovering and maximizing our fullest potential. Other sessions I attended included; Superintendent Evaluation, School Law Hot Topics, Student Discipline, Communications, Digital Dangers, and Discipline of Special Education students. This conference provides tremendous opportunities to share knowledge with other board members and administrators and learn from some excellent presentations.

As I look at the calendar we have only three weeks until the end of the quarter and the end of the first semester. I know it doesn't seem possible that we are that close to the end of the semester. As the semester ends I want to remind parents and students that the student's semester grades will be a part of your student's academic transcript. For students with high GPAs these grades will be part of your Senior GPA scholarship, financial aid, senior awards and class rank. For struggling students these semester grades will determine if you will need to

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be taking some classes over in the future. When students fail a course that is required for graduation for the semester, it not only complicates their future scheduling of classes but in most cases it requires extra time in school to meet the requirements for graduation. Please visit with your students about the value in finishing the semester strong. Encourage them to utilize the additional support we make available through Friday school and to request additional assistance from staff members to accomplish that end. Parent and guardian support for your child's academic success is one of the most important ingredients you can provide to assist your child's academics success. If students fail to attend Friday School, they will be expected to make arrangement to make up a minimum of equal time and possibly additional time if deemed necessary for their success.

As the seasons change we are in full swing this week with basketball and wrestling competition beginning this weekend. Our One-Act play performers displayed their talents and abilities twice locally in the past week and are competed at district one-act competition Tuesday in Hyannis.

Also, as the seasons change we need to be more aware of the weather conditions and school cancellations, late start and early outs. I will always make school cancellations decisions based on my assessment of safety and conditions for getting your children to and from school safely. If at any time you are not comfortable sending your children out on the road based on weather and road conditions in your area, please know that you always have that option. If you decide not to send your children to school when we are holding school, please call the school and let us know that they are not coming or that you will be

sending them later in the day. If the decision is made to cancel school, notice will be given on Hawk Alert - "Remind" and posted on Hay Springs Facebook page as well as area radio stations. If you have not already signed up for the "Remind" please contact the school office to get signed up to be sure you get the notices.

School improvement is and must be a continuous process in which you really never arrive, because as we strive to improve educational learning opportunities for our students we continually look for areas in our educational process where we can improve. It is with this in mind that I will again remind all of you of the mission, vision and goal statement of Hay Springs Public School.

Mission Statement

The Mission of Hay Springs Schools in cooperation with families and community, is to empower students within an emotionally supportive and physically safe environment with the academic, social, physical and technological skills to achieve success as responsible, self-disciplined citizens of a global society.

Vision Statement

"Empower Students to Achieve Lifelong Success."

Hay Springs Goal

All students will demonstrate an increase in math proficiency across the curriculum.

Providing a quality education is truly a cooperative effort and the cooperation of staff, students, parents, Board of Education, patrons and the community is alive and well in Hay Springs. Through continued cooperative efforts within our educational system we will continue to provide high quality education and learning opportunities for our Hay Springs students.

Thanks to all, for your continued support, and I want to wish each of you a blessed holiday season.



Winter is here!!

Keep a close eye on the weather and make sure your child has a hat, gloves, and coat with them each day! Please make sure you are signed up for the Parent/Student Notices on Remind!

Student Council

By Ms. Holtmeier



Non-perishable Food Drive

The annual food drive is set to begin December 3rd. We will be collecting food for the churches to be delivered before Christmas. We will collect **non-perishable items** through December 17th. Please keep in mind that last year they asked for some specific items such as diapers and toilet paper. Please dig deep and help us, help those with fewer advantages.

Student Council decided that we would run a contest by class, but due to the different sizes we will be counting the non-perishable items and dividing by the number of students in the class. Please keep in mind that items that come in an enclosed case, or are sold by the multiple item, such as ramen noodles or pop, will be counted as one item. The winning class will receive a pizza party.

Hawks Library News

What's been happening?

- 78 books added to the collection
- Top 5 Fiction books
 - *The Getaway*
 - *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*
 - *The Arrow over the Door*
 - *Follow the Star*
 - *Faceless*
- More crate seating - 20 total
- 4th grade found Farmer Fred's garden gloves by solving puzzles in a Breakout



NO SCHOOL

December 21st—January 1st

The school offices will also be closed.

MERRY CHRISTMAS



OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE

By Melissa Mracek

December Baking Basics and Sewing

The December Baking Basics will be held on Friday, December 21st starting at 9 am. In the morning the youth will create muffins and sugar cookies to share with nursing home residents. Starting at 11 am the youth will begin sewing 4-H projects. The group will be taking a break from their quilts to deliver the goodies to the residents. This workshop fee is \$5. Please contact Melissa Mracek at (308) 327-2312 if you have any questions.



HS BOYS BASKETBALL PREVIEW

By Coach Borm

We return 3 starters from a rough 6-19 season a year ago. Trent Reed, Brodey Planansky, and Johnny Toof are the returners who will look to lead the 2018-19 campaign. We also look forward to Jake Roberts, Chaz Twarling and everyone's favorite, Sean West returning for this season. There are four freshmen who will be making their high school basketball debut and will likely need to contribute immediately. Those freshmen are Logan DeCoste, Gabe Varbel, Payton Prado and Sam Hindman. We open the season at Cody-Kilgore on November 30th, which is followed by our home opener against Arthur County on December 1st. A relatively heavy home schedule includes the following home games:

Arthur County, December 1st, 2:00 pm

Morrill, December 4th, 3:00 pm

Mullen, December 8th, 2:00 pm

Hemingford, December 11th, 3:30 pm

Leyton, January 5th, 1:00 pm

Gordon-Rushville, January 8th, 4:00 pm

Cody-Kilgore, January 10th, 3:00 pm

Sioux County, January 24th, 3:00 pm

Edgemont, January 31st, 4:00 pm

Garden County, February 8th, 3:00 pm

We look forward to seeing everyone come support the boys and girls basketball teams this winter!



Music Notes

By Raine Varvel

Join us for two evenings of Christmas cheer!! The 7th & 8th grade band and choir as well as the high school band and the community choir will be performing for the Night, The Lights and Music concert on Friday, December 7th at 7:30pm following the Santa Soup Cook-off. Then the 1st, 2nd and 3rd graders will perform "Jingle Bells Around the World" on Monday, December 17th at 7pm.



The high school band continues to prepare for our trip to Branson, MO at the end of May 2019, where we will have the opportunity to be the opening act for one of the professional theaters in Branson (we are hoping for the Haygoods), as well as do some sight-seeing. There are monthly bake sales usually held at Security First Bank-HOWEVER in December we have something rather special planned! On Friday, December 14th Trisha at Main Street Grind has opened her coffee shop to us-giving us 50% of sales, as well as any tips we earn. Students will be making the beverages as well as manning the bake sale! Plan to stop by between 8am-noon. Thanks so much to Trisha for her support!

High School Band is going to spend the week of December 10th-13th playing a big game of BAND BINGO! Each high school band member will be submitting an audition for Class D All State Band held in Kearney in February. In an attempt to get them prepared for this audition, students will receive a BINGO card that has many performance opportunities around the school, home and community. If a student asks to play for you, please sign the corresponding box on their BINGO card. Hopefully you see (and hear) these kids out and about trying to fill up their BINGO cards. Students who fill 5 slots on their sheet will receive a pop; those who get a blackout will receive a pizza party the following week.

Upcoming dates:

- The Night, The Lights and Music (7th-HS) Friday, December 7th @ 7:30pm
- 1st, 2nd & 3rd grade Christmas Program Monday, December 17th @ 7pm

*Kindergarten, 4th, 5th & 6th grade will have a concert in the Spring.

Speech Notes

Speech team meetings are happening every Thursday during lunch. We have gone over every event, and have now begun to work on individual events. Competitions will begin after the first of the year!



Report cards will be available for pickup on January 8th



Girls Basketball Season Preview

By Coach Badje

Success: Meriam Webster defines it as, “a favorable or desired outcome, or the attainment of wealth or favor”. We all desire success, but the question is can we all attain it. If I don’t receive my desired outcome, am I unsuccessful? If I am not the recipient of wealth or favor, am I a failure? I believe one of the all-time great basketball coaches, John Wooden, had a better measurement for our lives. Coach Wooden coined his own definition of success as this, “the peace of mind attained only through self-satisfaction in knowing you made the effort to do the best of which you’re capable.” Wooden states he never spoke of winning much to his teams, yet this was a man who won 10 NCAA titles, six consecutive championships and 12 Final Four appearances while coaching at UCLA. I believe there is a lesson to be learned here. Meriam Webster isn’t always right.

I am not making concession or down-playing the drive to win or the significance of it, I am just looking for perspective. This year the goal of 2018-19 Lady Hawks Basketball team is to be successful, to be satisfied with our effort and do the best of what we are capable. The two things we can control on the court and in life is attitude and effort, the rest is just worrisome wonderings of what we can do nothing about.

The roster this year contains two seniors, one junior, five sophomores, and three freshmen. We are young overall, but many of this year’s sophomores were required to perform before their time last year. That experience should prove valuable, though, this year. Hay Springs graduated our two leading scorers last year, so we will need to find players to fill that niche. I am expecting that we should be a balanced team and our scoring could come evenly and from many. With our smaller stature, we aim to be quick and increase our fierceness on defense. Other pre-season keys are focused on offensive and defensive rebounds as well as ball security. Our aim is to do these four things well and not get too caught up in perfecting everything, which isn’t possible anyway. Every team has a personality, this is what we hope to develop.

Please come and support Jessi, Erin, Katie, Bailey, Joce, Jaiden, Hannah W., Hannah H., Ashley, Jazzy and Laney this year. They are already working hard. The girls are very coachable. I appreciate their attitudes. Encourage their success as they seek to be their best. Look for those improvements, and tell them about it. It’s easy to see what should be improved, and its seldom recognized what has been improved. You never know, those good words might just help them take the next step to be the best they can be.

High School Wrestling Preview

By Coach McCance



This year there will be six Hawks taking to the mat. With returning last year letter earners, Senior, Austin Anderson, Juniors, Baiden Planansky and Bryce Running Hawk. We also welcome new blood in the room with sophomore Kade Moore. Also new to the team this year, Freshman Blair Henry. With the extended Football season, we started a couple weeks behind normal practice start time, the week after Thanksgiving break. Our first Tournament will be Nov. 30 in Custer, South Dakota. I'm excited to get this session under way, and believe that we have a very talented team that all have a legit chance to go to Omaha in February. I hope to see all the Hawk fans at our home dual Dec. 6th against Crawford and Hemingford.

HS FB WRAP-UP

By Coach Borm



A long, successful football season has finally reached a conclusion. The Hawks finished 11-1 and state runner-ups on the year. We lost a tough, back-and-forth battle with Wilcox-Hildreth in the State Championship with a final score of 52-40. This was a very historic season in terms of Hay Springs Football. With a win over Spalding Academy in the quarterfinals, we achieved the first 10-win season in school history. This record was set again with a semi-final win over Minatare to earn the first 11-win season. The state championship game was the first title game appearance in school history as well.

Trent Reed ran his way into the record books by setting the 6-man career rushing yards record with an astounding 6,821 yards in 3 years. This season, Trent was 3rd in all of Nebraska 6-man with 2,604 yards and 38 rushing touchdowns on the year. This includes a 272 yard, 3 touchdown performance in the state championship game.

Brodey Planansky and Bryce Running Hawk were the leading receivers on the year with 10 receiving touchdowns each. Bryce finished with 17 catches for 416 yards and Brodey finished with 14 catches for 372 yards.

The Hay Springs Defense (dubbed The Legion of Boom by Mr. Bounous) was the backbone of this successful season. They allowed a total of 188 points in 12 games for an average of 15.7 points a game which included two shutouts, both over Minatare. The defense surrendered just 111 rushing yards a game and 97 passing yards a game for a total of 208 yards allowed per game, a pretty remarkable feat in 6-man football. Our defense was led by Running Hawk with 147 tackles on the year. Also important pieces of our defense were Baiden Planansky (88 tackles), Trent Reed (84 tackles), Kade Moore (79 tackles), Jarret Pieper (56 tackles) and Johnny Toof (48 tackles).

We say goodbye to five seniors who went a combined 24-6 (.800) in 3 years of 6-man football after going 1-7 as freshmen. The seniors are:

#14 Austin Anderson

#33 Trent Reed

#42 Jarret Pieper

#44 Johnny Toof

#62 Mavrik Wagnitz

We all wish these seniors the best of luck and thank them for paving the way for the future of Hay Springs football. Thank you to everyone in the community who showed support in any form over the course of this outstanding season. It is impossible to state how much that meant to our team.

Final Results:

@Potter-Dix, W 68-6

@Creek Valley, W 69-12

South Platte, W 45-8

@Cody-Kilgore, W 45-26

Minatare, W 39-0

Crawford, W 45-6

@Hyannis, W 43-32

Sioux County, W 40-19

NSAA Playoffs

1st Round: Red Cloud, W 65-19

2nd Round: Spalding Academy, W 51-8

Semi-Finals: Minatare, W 38-0

State Championship: Wilcox-Hildreth, L 40-52



Thank you to everyone in the community who showed support in any form over the course of this outstanding season.

Counselor's To Do List

By Kim Marx

EducationQuest Foundation College Planning Bulletin

A monthly college planning guide for Nebraska high school students

December 2018

What to expect after you submit your FAFSA

The [FAFSA](#) opened October 1, so many of you have already completed and submitted your form. Here's what happens next:

Expect a Student Aid Report (SAR). You'll receive it via an email link if you provided an email address on your FAFSA. The SAR acknowledges that your FAFSA was received and lets you know if you need to take further action to process your FAFSA.

Make sure you applied for admission to colleges you listed on your FAFSA.

Colleges who receive your FAFSA results typically won't send you a financial aid package until you've applied and have been accepted to the school.

Watch for verification requests. The college(s) you listed on your FAFSA might request verification of your FAFSA information. If so, send the required documents to the colleges' financial aid office.

Watch for financial aid award notifications. The colleges you were accepted to – and listed on your FAFSA – will send you financial aid award notifications detailing the types and amounts of aid they're offering based on your financial need.

Haven't completed your FAFSA yet?

No problem! You and a parent can complete the form at [FAFSA.gov](#). Before you start, create an FSA ID for you and one for a parent at [fsaid.ed.gov](#). You'll need them to access and sign the form.

Omaha – 888.357.6300
Lincoln – 800.303.3745
Kearney – 800.666.3721
Scottsbluff – 800.303.3745, ext. 6654

Winning the scholarship game

Follow these tips to increase your chances of earning scholarships:

Don't ever pay for scholarship searches! Use free resources such as [ScholarshipQuest](#) at EducationQuest.org with over 2,000 Nebraska-based scholarships, or free national sites like [Cappex](#), [GoodCall](#), and [Chegg](#).

Visit your school counselor often for information about local scholarships.

Focus on local and college-specific scholarships because you're more likely to earn them.

Update your activities, honors, community service or paid jobs using the [Activities Resume](#) at EducationQuest.org.

Earn the best possible ACT/SAT scores by taking the exam in the spring of your junior year and again in the fall of your senior year.

Use quality references such as a teacher, coach or counselor. Encourage them to write specific examples of your leadership skills. Give them a specific deadline, and a copy of your Activities Resume.

Tailor your essay to the scholarship. Ask an English teacher to read your essay and offer advice on making a big impact. Your essay will need to stand out from other applications.

December "To Do" List

Complete these tasks during December to stay on the right college planning track.

Seniors:

__ If you haven't already, submit [college applications](#) and the [FAFSA](#).

__ Continue to apply for [scholarships](#).

__ Use this [College Timeline](#) to stay on track to college.

__ Follow EducationQuest on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) for a chance to win a [\\$500 scholarship](#).

Juniors

__ Take an ACT prep course.

__ Set up a [ScholarshipQuest](#) profile and start searching for Nebraska-based scholarships.

__ Use this [College Timeline](#) to stay on track to college.

---__ Follow EducationQuest on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) for a chance to win a [\\$500 scholarship](#).

Cafeteria News

By Mrs. Young



Christmas Dinner will be served on Thursday, December 20th. Please feel free to come and have dinner with your Child/Grandchild, although, you must RSVP no later than Thursday, December 13th! This is so very important! We love the crowd and your company is great, but we almost didn't have enough for Thanksgiving because we had so many unexpected guests. We have to order our menu a week in advance so calling the day of, just doesn't work. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter!

- Winners of the magic plate were: Leighton Haller, Alexa Tonjes and Gabby Twarling!
- Merry Christmas from all of us in the Kitchen! Have a wonderful Holiday and a great New Year!

School Improvement Survey Results

Hay Springs Public Schools is in the first year of a five year school improvement cycle. During year 1 the school's objective is to set educational goals. These goals are developed by looking at data from the Nebraska Department of Education report, academic achievement reports and surveys.

Earlier this school year, 155 community members, staff members, students and parents partook in the school improvement survey. These results were then divided into common themes. The survey revealed that the school provided a safe environment, the curriculum is meaningful and teachers are accessible and helpful. It also revealed that the amount of technology and its uses were of value.

The survey also showed areas of concern. These areas included the school's consistency with code of conduct, the schools environmental conditions and communications between the school and its patrons. To help us further investigate and plan for the next five years we need a little more information from you. Please take the time to answer this short survey on communication found on the school website. www.hshawks.com



Flexible Seating

By Mrs. Mintken

The last couple of years the elementary has had two fundraisers- Box Tops for Kids and Reading for Education. The money that has been raised was used to buy flexible seating options in our classrooms. Flexible seating has many benefits. It helps to keep children comfortable, so they can be productive learners. The students have loved being able to sit on something different than a chair. Thank you for helping our students love learning!



HERE'S THE IMPACT OF READING 20 MINUTES PER DAY!

A student who reads

20:00

minutes per day

will be exposed to **1.8 MILLION** words per year and scores in **90th PERCENTILE** on standardized tests

A student who reads

5:00

minutes per day

will be exposed to **282,000** words per year and scores in **50th PERCENTILE** on standardized tests

A student who reads

1:00

minute per day

will be exposed to **8,000** words per year and scores in **10th PERCENTILE** on standardized tests



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Alternative Education

What is "alternative education?" An alternative school is one that offers the same basic curriculum as the "traditional" school but uses alternative delivery methods. While the structure of the alternative program may vary from site to site, there are common effective characteristics which have been identified in alternative schools: Small class size, supportive environment, autonomy and democratic structure, accountability and constant evaluations, opportunities for community involvement and a school environment. Valley Alternative Learning and Transitioning School (VALTS) has four teachers. One from each core content area.

VALTS is a consortium made up of 9 area schools.

- Gering High School
- Mitchell High School
- Scottsbluff High School
- Bridgeport High School
- Bayard High School
- Kimball High School
- Minatare High School
- Morrill High School
- Banner County High School

The student selection process for VALTS originates in the student's home school district. Requirements for graduation from VALTS are the same as for all other students in their home district. Since the inception of VALTS in 1998, there have been 628 graduates.

The Hay Springs One Act team earned 4th place and received a superior performance at Districts. Joce, Sam, Ashley and Gabe all received superior actor and actress recognition. Great Job One Act! !





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Accredited by: Nebraska Department of Education

2018 – 2019 School Profile

Community and School

Hay Springs, Nebraska is a small rural community of about 600 people located in Northwestern Nebraska at the junction of US Route 20 and State Highway 87.

Hay Springs Public School is located on the northeast side of town. The school serves students from preschool through grade 12. Total enrollment for the 2018-19 school year is 198.

Hay Springs High School provides a full high school program including math, science, language arts, social studies, music, physical education, business, industrial technology, world languages, and special education. Dual credit classes are offered as well as the opportunity to access online college classes. Activities include athletics, band, choir, and drama.

Enrollment

Preschool	22
Elementary	86
Middle School	41
High School	<u>49</u>
Total	198

Academic Program

School year calendar: semesters

Block scheduling: No

Grading Scale: 4.0

Calendar:

Monday through Thursday

Preschool 8:00 am – 12:00 pm

Or 12:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Elementary 8:00 am – 4:00 pm

Middle Level 8:00 am – 4:15 pm

High School 8:00 am – 4:15 pm

Class Schedule:

Middle Level & High School

7 periods per day

64 minutes per period

Credits:

High School

5 credits for semester course

10 credits for year course

240 credits for graduation

GPA:

High School only; Unweighted

Grading Scale

A 93 - 100

B 85 – 92

C 78 – 84

D 70 – 77

F 0 – 69

Graduation Requirements

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Credits</u>
English	40
Math	40
(including senior year)	
Science	30
Social Science	40
Phys Ed/Health	10
Fine Arts	10
Foreign Language	10
Career/Tech	20
Electives	<u>40</u>
Total	240

Post High School Information

2015 – 19 Graduates	84% attending college
2016 – 10 Graduates	60% attending college 20% joined military
2017 – 10 Graduates	70% attending college
2108 – 13 Graduates	85% attending college 7% joined military

ACT Scores

2017 – 18 students tested		
	Hay Springs	NEBRASKA
English	20.1	19.4
Math	20.5	19.8
Reading	21.5	20.4
Science	20.5	20.1
Composite	20.8	20.1

Nebraska State Assessment Data

Students are tested grade levels:

Grade				
3	Language	Math		
4	Language	Math		
5	Language	Math		Science
6	Language	Math		
7	Language	Math		
8	Language	Math		Science
11 (ACT)	Reading English	Math	Writing	Science

100% of students were tested at each grade and subject.

No students were exempted from NSCAS assessments

Changes to the State Assessments

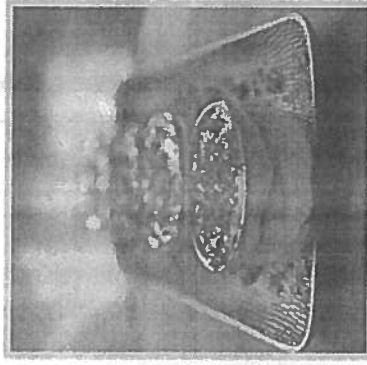
Starting with the 2016-17 school year all third year high school students will take the ACT test, including the writing portion. There will no longer be a separate writing test at grades 4 and 8. The Reading test will be a Language Arts test that will include Reading and English.

Graduation Rate

Hay Springs High School	92%
Nebraska	89%

For more information, see the Nebraska Department of Education Nebraska Education Profile website:
<http://nep.education.ne.gov/>

DECEMBER 2018



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 is: PB&J/Nacho Bar/Pizza					
2	3 Breakfast: Breakfast Pizza Lunch: Fish Sticks/Pork Fitter/MacN Cheese	4 Breakfast: Breakfast Sandwich Lunch: Beef & Noodle/Mashed Pot/Com	5 Breakfast: Caramel Rolls Lunch: Chicken Strips/Smiley FF	6 Breakfast: Biscuits N Gravy Lunch: Soft Taco/Strawberry Cup	7	8
9	10 Breakfast: Breakfast Tornado Lunch: Pigs n Blanket/ Baked Beans	11 Breakfast: French Toast Lunch: Lasagna/Garlic Bread	12 Breakfast: Eggs & Bacon Lunch: Fried Chicken/Mashed Pot/Com	13 Breakfast: Pancakes/Sausage Link Lunch: Beef To School Burgers/Chicken Patty/FF	14	15
16	17 Breakfast: Biscuits/Gravy Lunch: Hot Ham & Cheese Sub/Tots	18 Breakfast: Cream Cheese Bagel Lunch: Pasta Pizza Bake/Green Beans	19 Breakfast: Breakfast Sandwich Lunch: Burritos/Chicken Quesadillas	20 Breakfast: Pancake/Sausage Lunch: On A Stick Christmas Dinner: Ham/Scalloped Pot/Roll/Dessert	21	22
23	24 NO SCHOOL	25 NO SCHOOL	26 NO SCHOOL	27 NO SCHOOL	28	29
30	31	NOTES: Thank you goes out to Sheridan County Livestock, Judd Hoos for donating beef to our School Breakfast and Lunch Program. Thank you to Security First Bank (processing), BNSF Railroad 2 Freezers, Russ & Sue Lechtenberg 1 freezer, Sandhills State Bank \$100, Greg Heiting & Brian Forney (Transportation)				

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Common Sense on Self-Expression and Identity



What's the Issue?

In the offline world, unless it's Halloween, it's pretty clear who you are. Online, your kids can be penguins, zombies, or ninjas. Their screen names can be SexyKitten or AngryBoy. The fact is, in digital life kids can be anyone they want to be. They can make up screen names, create fictitious profiles, or look any way they want by designing an avatar (a cartoon alter ego) that is only restricted by their imaginations.

Why Does It Matter?

Because so much of the way kids interact in the online world revolves around creating personal profiles and avatars, identity starts to take on a new meaning. Playing around with creative identities can be a safe and imaginative way for kids to explore who they are. And having an alter ego can be a real gift for a kid who's particularly shy or who fears rejection.

On the other hand, a digital identity can be a way for kids to dodge personal consequences. When kids are disguised as anonymous, they can push limits and act in ways they wouldn't in the real world. Some may explore antisocial or harmful identities - from being a thug to an anorexic. Others simply over-share and create reputations that might come back to haunt them. Either way, if there's a large gap between an online and offline identity, it can fragment a kid's sense of self (especially when the online identity gets a lot of feedback and the kid becomes dependent on it). Add in the potential of a huge audience, and kids' natural desire for attention and recognition can turn into something less than healthy - perhaps a quest for "15 minutes of fame."

common sense says

Talk to your kids about anonymity. Just because your kids are disguised doesn't mean they can't be identified. They must be responsible for their actions, whether they're portrayed as a penguin or a person.

Remember that exploration is part of growing up. Ask questions about your kids' online identities. Why did they make the choices they did?

If your kids' avatars or screen names concern you, talk with them. Ask questions about their choices. And don't be too quick to worry or judge. Their identities can mean something deep, or be the result of a whim.

Identities grounded in hatred, violence, illegal activities, or risky sexual behavior should be avoided entirely. No child needs to be associated with unhealthy or unethical behavior.

Ask your kids to think about who they want to be in their online life. Is the digital identity they're creating currently how they want to be perceived? How about in 5 years? In 20 years? Remind them that they have the power to present and control their identities and reputations.

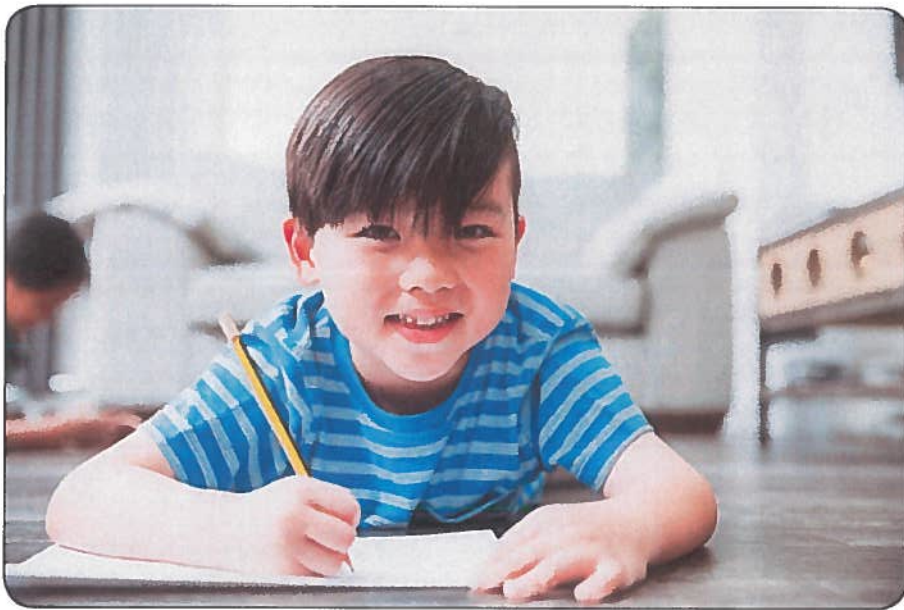


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Elementary School Parents[®]

Hay Springs Public Schools

make the difference!



Give your child opportunities to practice writing at home

Good writing takes practice and there's not enough time in the school day for as much as kids need. So experts recommend that students spend at least 15 minutes a day writing at home.

Writing is vital to success in school. Learning to write well will also boost your child's confidence and allow him to express his feelings and ideas.

To give your child the regular writing practice he needs, ask him to:

- **Help.** When you write a letter, make a grocery list or decide on the dinner menu, dictate it to your child. Have him write the words down.
- **Keep a journal.** Give your child a notebook and encourage him to

write in it daily. Suggest he write about things that happen to him and how he feels about them.

- **Make lists.** Ask your child to make lists of things he wants to do or things he needs to remember.
- **Copy.** Encourage your child to write down the words to his favorite songs. Your child may also enjoy copying down favorite quotations or poems.
- **Record.** When you take your child out, ask him to bring a notebook. In it, he should describe what he sees and experiences. Views from the car window or sights and sounds while walking in nature are great places to start.

A study buddy can make learning fun



Sometimes, kids can learn better if they work with another student. Having a study buddy can

be an effective way for students to master challenging material.

Study buddies can help each other practice math facts. They can prepare for a class presentation. They can test each other to see what they know—and don't know.

Of course, without a bit of planning, a session with a study buddy can turn into nothing more than social time. Here are some tips to make a study session productive:

- **Commit to the purpose.** Both students should agree that they are getting together to study math or social studies—not to play Fortnite or other games.
- **Choose someone responsible.** Both students should be focused on learning.
- **Set a schedule.** Your child and her buddy might meet at the library. Or they could take turns going to each other's houses.
- **Set goals.** Decide what is going to be covered during a session. Then stick to it!

Midyear is the perfect time to review your child's attendance



The halfway point of the school year is approaching. It's time for a mid-year checkup on your child's attendance.

Each year in the United States, close to eight million students are at risk academically because they are chronically absent. Here's what researchers have found:

- **School absences add up.** When students aren't in school, they miss out on valuable learning.
- **Missing school becomes a habit.** Students who miss a lot of school in kindergarten are still frequently absent in fifth grade.
- **There is a clear relationship** between early attendance and later achievement. Kids who come to school regularly in the early grades

are still doing well in secondary school—and they are more likely to graduate from high school. How many days of school has your child missed this year? If you're unsure, contact the school to find out. It's not too late to get back on track so he can have a successful school year—and school career.

Source: "Why Attendance and Chronic Absence?" *Count Us In! Toolkit 2018*, Attendance Works, niswc.com/elementary-chronic-absence.

"Students are at academic risk if they miss 10 percent or more of the school year, or about 18 days a year."

—Attendance Works

Are you finding time to spend with your family?



To reach their full potential in school and in life, children need frequent, meaningful, undivided attention from parents. But today's busy lifestyles make finding that time difficult.

Are you finding ways to spend quality family time together? Answer *yes* or *no* to each of the questions below to find out:

- ___ **1. Do you strive to eat dinner as a family regularly?**
- ___ **2. Have you set limits on the number of extracurricular activities your child can participate in?**
- ___ **3. Do you have a bedtime routine that includes spending at least five minutes talking with your child?**
- ___ **4. Do you schedule one-on-one time with each of your children each week?**
- ___ **5. Have you designated screen-free times? Digital devices can cause separation even when family members are together.**

How well are you doing?

More *yes* answers mean you're finding ways to make family time a priority. For *no* answers, try those ideas.

Elementary School Parents

make the difference!

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Talk to your elementary schooler about cheating and why it's wrong



Many parents think cheating doesn't happen in elementary school. But cheating often begins during competitive

elementary school games. A child may say she wasn't "out," for example, when she really was. Other kids may think, "No fair! Now I have to cheat to win!"

Around third grade, when many students begin receiving letter grades and taking standardized tests, academic cheating often rears its head.

Keep in mind that parents play an important role in cheating prevention, and that:

- **Cheating is more tempting to elementary schoolers than preschoolers, and the pressure increases in middle school.**
- **Young kids are confused about cheating.** Although they believe it is wrong, they also think it might be OK on some occasions. The line between right and wrong can be tricky for them.
- **Peer pressure influences cheating.** When a classmate suggests cheating (such as by asking to copy a homework assignment), it can be difficult to say *no*. Role-play possible responses with your child.
- **Cheating is an ethical issue that affects more than academics.** For example, some people cheat in sports or lie to get a job.
- **Too much pressure from parents increases the risk of cheating.** Let your child know that working hard and being honest is more important than getting a certain grade.

Boost reading comprehension and writing skills with summaries



Homework in elementary school often involves reading something—a chapter in a textbook or a few pages in a library

book. One way to make sure your child understands what she has read is to have her write a summary.

One night, after your child has finished her homework, tell her you'd like to find out what she's learned and what she's read about. Ask her to write down the most important points in her own words.

Your child may need to go back and read the material again. When she knows she has to write about it, she'll read more carefully. She'll think more as she reads.

After your child writes her summary, give her this set of questions to help her write more complete summaries in the future:

- **Who** are the characters or people involved? Suggest that she write about each person and what's important about each one.
- **What** did the characters do? Your child should write down the plot in her own words.
- **Where** did the story take place? Have your child describe the setting in some detail.
- **When** did the events take place? Your child should give the time span of the action.
- **Why** did things occur as they did? Have her explain why the characters behaved the way they did.

Once your child gets the hang of writing summaries after she reads school material, she will soon reap the benefits. Not only will she have a much better understanding of what she reads, she will improve her writing skills as well!

Show your child how to give meaningful gifts this season



Many people exchange gifts over the holiday season. While children love receiving gifts, they also enjoy being

able to give them.

Does your child know that the most meaningful gifts don't have to cost money? They simply take time and come straight from the heart.

Share these thoughtful gift ideas with your child. She could:

- **Offer to do chores** for an elderly neighbor.
- **Record herself reading a book** for a younger sibling to listen to while reading.
- **Make a list**, such as "My 10 Best Memories With Grandpa."
- **Play a favorite game** with a family member or a neighbor who is homebound.
- **Record an audio or video message** for a loved one who lives far away.
- **Create a playlist** with a bunch of her favorite songs to share.
- **Bake cookies** and deliver them to someone who may not receive many homemade gifts.
- **Create a calendar** for 2019 and decorate it with personalized artwork, one drawing for each month.
- **Make a gift certificate** good for two hours of help around the house.
- **Create a beautiful picture or poem** about a special person.

Q: I wondered why I wasn't hearing about the school events that other parents knew about. Then I opened my son's backpack. I found crumpled papers, a dirty shirt and a smashed up pack of crackers. His chronic disorganization is affecting his schoolwork—he loses things and can't find what he needs. How can I help him get on track?

Questions & Answers

A: There are costs to being disorganized, as you and your son have discovered. Luckily, a child doesn't need to be born with a special organizing gene. Organization skills can be taught.

Talk with your son about *why* you're going to help him get organized. Wouldn't he like to know where his homework is? Wouldn't he like to be able to find his math folder?

Then follow these three steps:

1. **Have your child give his backpack a thorough cleaning.** After he straightens out all the wads of paper, help him decide what's important and what can be tossed. (And he can also return the forms his teacher is probably waiting for.)
2. **Make sure your child has a binder or a folder for each subject.** Color code them so he can remember that green = science and blue = math, for example. Everything for each subject goes in its folder.
3. **Teach your child to empty his backpack every day after school.** He can put papers and forms for you to review in one pile, and things he needs to do for homework in another.

Your child might never be super organized, but now he'll be able to find his math homework!

It Matters: Building Character

Persistence is key to success in school and in life



It's wonderful for students to be talented and smart, but educators know it's just as important for them to

be persistent. At one time or another everyone faces a challenging task or a heartbreaking setback. The key is to remind children to keep trying until they are successful. Pushing forward—even when it's tough—is a key to success in school and in life.

To promote persistence in your child:

- **Talk about it.** How has persistence already helped your child? Maybe he learned to ride a bike or play an instrument. What new challenge can he tackle now?
- **Break big goals** into small parts. If your child is determined to raise his grade in English, support him by discussing steps and helping him develop a reasonable plan.
- **Offer encouragement.** When your child is working on something challenging, say things like:
 - » *I know you can do this.*
 - » *I bet you'll figure it out.*
 - » *You're making great progress. Keep at it. You'll get it.*
 - » *It will get better. You'll get the hang of it.*
 - » *If it doesn't work that way, try another way.*
- **Focus on the process.** Sure, it feels great to see an A on a report card, but it also feels great to do well on a test after studying hard. Even better, it feels great to learn! Talk with your child about his accomplishments and what makes each of them worthwhile.

Promote kindness and teach your child to take action

Children aren't always kind to one another. They pick on other kids. They say mean things behind people's backs.

But your child doesn't have to accept that unkindness as the norm. Instead, you can teach your child a simple rule: Do something about it.

If your child witnesses a classmate being treated unkindly or left out, help her think through actions she could take. She could:

- **Start a conversation** with the classmate about a book she has read or a school assignment.
- **Ask the classmate** to sit with her at lunch.
- **Compliment the classmate** on something. "Your handwriting is neat," or "I like that shirt."
- **Smile at the classmate.** Sometimes all it takes is a simple smile to make someone's day.

Challenge your child to do at least one kind thing for a classmate each



week and ask her to report on what she did—and how it made her feel.

As your child takes these actions, she will learn *many* lessons. She will learn how good it feels to do something positive to help another person. Even more importantly, she will learn that when she sees something wrong, she doesn't have to accept it. Instead, she has the power to make a difference.

Source: L. and R. Eyre, *Teaching Your Children Values*, Fireside Books, Simon & Schuster.

Focus on four areas as you help your child develop character



Your child may have been born with certain personality traits, but think of his character as a work in progress.

In other words, the kind of person he'll eventually become is still being shaped. Teach him to:

1. **Take responsibility.** We're all accountable for our actions. Tell your child that he can't control others, but he can control his choices and actions.

2. **Be flexible.** Model compromise and negotiation by listening to the opinions of others. Encourage your child to do the same.
3. **Show empathy.** Teach your child to imagine how others might feel.
4. **Be respectful.** Talk to your child about what respectful behavior looks like, at home and at school. He can show respect at school by raising his hand before speaking in class. He can show respect at home by helping out with chores.

BUILDING READERS®

How Families Can Help Children Become Better Readers

Hay Springs Public Schools

Five strategies can help you support a struggling reader

If your child is having trouble with reading, it can affect all of his classes. His confidence is a key element of his reading success. To help your child keep a positive outlook:

1. **Avoid comparing him** with others. Children develop reading skills at different rates—and that's OK. Help your child focus on his strengths.
2. **Ask his teacher** for suggestions of how to help him with reading at home.
3. **Plan small steps** to help him overcome struggles. Match goals to his age and ability so he can experience success. Nothing breeds success like success.
4. **Create a reading routine** that your child finds enjoyable.
5. **Keep up-to-date** with his progress in school. Don't let problems escalate.



A snowman makes winter reading fun

There's just something about a snowman that seems to inspire writers. And December is the perfect time of year to check out one of these wintry titles:

- *Sneezy the Snowman* by Maureen Wright.
 - *The Greatest Snowman in the World!* by Peter Hannan.
 - *Beware, The Snowman* by R.L. Stine.
 - *Case of the Sneaky Snowman* by Carolyn Keene.
- After sharing one (or all!) of these snowy stories with your child, build a snowman together—either outside out of actual snow, or inside out of paper, cotton balls or even marshmallows.

What kinds of adventures could your child's snowman have? Ask her to write down a tale. Then, make it a tradition to read her story on the first day of winter every year.

Strong attendance has a direct impact on your child's reading skills

Research shows that missing school has negative effects on reading and learning. This winter, recommit to ensuring your child is in school on time every day. Then, begin 2019 with routines that support good attendance. Stick to a regular sleep schedule and gather items for school the night before. This makes mornings easier and prevents tardiness.



Source: "Attendance in the Early Grades: Why it Matters for Reading," Attendance Works, niscw.com/br-attendance.

Don't let cold weather increase time spent in front of screens!

Experts recommend parents set limits on kids' recreational screen time. But it's easy to lose track of screen time when it's too cold to play outside.

Brainstorm and make a list of fun reading-related alternative activities.

On cold days, have your child choose an activity from the list.



Pay attention to textbook pictures

Pictures in textbooks can give students a clearer idea of what a chapter is about. Before your child reads a chapter in her textbook, have her look at the pictures and ask herself:

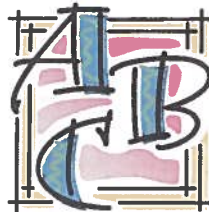
- **What does the picture** show?
- **What details** are there?
- **Why did** the authors and editors include this picture?



Boost your child's reading comprehension

The older your child gets, the more complex his school reading becomes. He needs strong reading comprehension skills to do his best in school. To help your child understand what he reads, encourage him to:

1. **Read aloud.** This slows down reading and helps your child "process" words.
2. **Read to relax.** Encourage your child to read enjoyable books for fun.
3. **Reread.** Reading things more than once can help your child understand new concepts and learn new vocabulary.
4. **Supplement his reading.** Look for interesting, non-intimidating materials related to what your child is learning in school.
5. **Discuss his reading.** Ask questions that encourage thinking. "Would you recommend this book to a friend? Why or why not?"

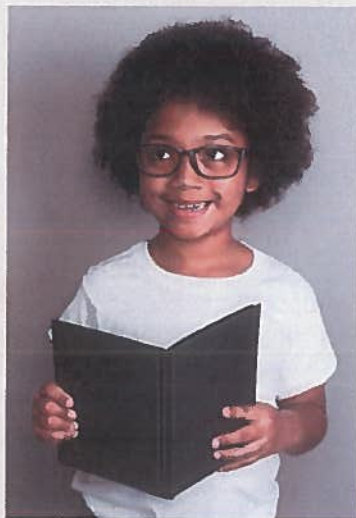


Play dictionary games to learn new words

To build your child's vocabulary, have some fun with a dictionary. Before starting, make 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:

- **Definition First.** Read only the definition of a word. Have the other players try to guess the word.
- **Which Is It?** Find an unusual word in the dictionary. Say the word. Then, read two definitions: the correct one and a definition of another word. Ask players to guess the correct definition.



Q: My child gets frustrated when he struggles to read a word. How can I help?

A: Suggest that he become a "reading detective." He can look for clues, such as sounds in the word and nearby pictures. You can also discuss similar words he knows. Sometimes it helps to reread the sentence or to skip the troublesome word and keep reading. Then say, "What word would make sense there?"

Story starters bring life to writing

To help your child practice writing, share irresistible story starters:

- **It's the year 2118.** What are your future relatives doing?
- **You're a space explorer.** What does your ship look like, and where are you going?
- **It is raining cats and dogs—real ones!** What do you do?



For lower elementary readers:

- **President Taft Is Stuck in the Bath** by Mac Barnett. Legend has it that the 27th president, William Howard Taft, was once stuck in a White House bathtub! Did that happen?

- **Mirror, Mirror: A Book of Reversible Verse** by Marilyn Singer. These poems based on fairy tales have a special feature. They can be read down the page or up the page for different meanings!



For upper elementary readers:

- **Confetti Girl** by Diana López. Join Lina as she goes through her school year—playing volleyball with her best friend, running a booth at the school carnival and adding to her unique collection of socks.
- **Word After Word After Word** by Patricia Maclachlan. A writer tells fourth graders that everyone has a story to tell—and together they discover how right she is.

Building Readers®

How Families Can Help Children Become Better Readers

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