



USD 251 NORTH LYON COUNTY NEWSLETTER

COMMENTS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Over the past several weeks there has been considerable discussion in the district concerning the topic of district facilities and what the Board of Education intends to do in the future. Not surprisingly, these discussions have given life to a number of rumors. The Board of Education is actually involved in a process called "Strategic Planning," which nearly all schools regularly do in order to be proactive about meeting future needs. Part of that effort was to research what the district's facility options are in terms of costs, patron wishes, and the pros and cons of each option. Among the options being explored is the idea of a centrally located facility serving either grades K-12, 7-12, or 9-12. The Board will also be looking at what the long term effects will be of maintaining the current facilities, some of which are in need of repair and improvement. A few patrons have even proposed district dissolution, but that option was dismissed quickly. What is important to understand is that there have been no proposals, nor have there been any decisions made on the subject. Rest assured that the Board of Education will continue to research all options as they strategically plan for a successful future for North Lyon County Schools.

IMPORTANT DATES

- December 9—Senior Citizen Dinner at NHHS**
- December 21-January 1—Winter Break**
- January 2—No School—Teacher Inservice**
- January 3—School Resumes**



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For a complete schedule of activities in the district, please either check the school calendar or our website at <http://www.usd251.org>. If you do not have a school calendar and would like one, please call the District Office at 620-443-5116.

Flipping Over Success!

In honor of American Education Week and to celebrate 21 Standards of Excellence, the students and staff of USD #251 were treated to breakfast featuring Chris Cakes. Students and staff were served all you can eat pancakes and sausage by the district administrative staff, and were congratulated for earning Building Wide Standard of Excellence in Reading and Math for Americus/NLC School, Reading Elementary, and Northern Heights High School. Americus/NLC School and Reading Elementary also earned Building Wide Standard of Excellence in Science.



READING SCHOOL



AMERICUS & NLC JUNIOR HIGH



NORTHERN HEIGHTS HIGH SCHOOL



DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS



2011 STAR PERFORMER & WOW AWARD

The E.L. & Z. Irene Hopkins Foundation established the Star Performer & WOW Awards to honor teachers and school support staff in USD #251, North Lyon County. Nominations can be submitted by students, parents and other co-workers. Deadline for nominations is: March 15, 2012. Contact the District Office for nomination forms.

Mail, fax or deliver to:

Kathy Dreier, P.O. Box 527, Americus, KS 66835

Phone: 620-443-5116 Fax: 620-443-5659



Reading



Principal's Pen

By Peggy Fort

The character trait for December is **Responsibility-**

Being ethically accountable for the welfare and care of another, being answerable for your own behavior—reliable; involving duties and obligations.

The color is red.

American Education Week: American Education week was celebrated during the week of November 14-18, 2011. Students at Reading School participated in a variety of activities. A spirit week was held with a theme for each day. “Cuddle Up with Learning” was the theme for Monday. Students wore their pj’s and had an all school read in the gym . Dr. Jorge Ballister, ESU Science Department, gave an assembly of science tricks.

Tuesday’s theme was “Favorite Character Day”. Students dressed like their favorite character from a book. Chris Cakes came to make pancakes for all students to celebrate their great success on the Kansas State Assessments 2011. All classes enjoyed nutrition classes from the Lyon County Extension Office.

Wednesday’s theme was “Learning Takes You Around the World”. Students dressed like another part of the world. Thursday’s theme was “Education is your Future”. Students dressed as their future profession or dressed to show their future college spirit. Friday’s theme was “Our School is Cool”. Students wore their school shirts. The students had a spelling bee and popsicles at the end of the day.



‘Tis the Season

The annual Winter Program will be held on Monday, December 12, 2011, beginning at 7:00 p.m. The program is called “Home for the Holiday”. After the program, a special guest will pay a visit to the youngsters at the school. A big thank you to the Reading Lions Club and PTO for their sponsorship for the evening.

BUILDING READERS IN USD 251—TITLE I

Erin Stahl.....Peggy Fort

Parents Make a Difference

Children who enjoy reading have a big advantage over those who don't. What can you do to help build your child's desire to read?

Reading interesting stories to your child is the most effective way. With Christmas around the corner, there are four simple gifts you could give your child to help them want to read more:

1. A personal library card along with regular visits to the library.
2. A “book basket” to carry reading materials from room to room. Example: your child can take it outside in the summer, to the kitchen while dinner is being prepared, and then to their bedroom at night.
3. A bedside light to encourage a little nighttime reading. Jim Trelease says, “It is probably the best night school your child will attend.”
4. A novel set or stack of your child's very own books to collect and read again. Children love to read books over and over again.

It doesn't matter if your child reads the back of a cereal box or the daily newspaper, just as long as they keep reading.

KINDERGARTEN WITH MS. HARRISON: We are under water here in the Reading, Kansas Kindergarten room...well we're pretending to be anyway. Our classroom is decorated as an underwater ocean...complete with a whole wall that's blue with fish swimming everywhere. Our job chart is an eight-legged octopus and the centers have fun ocean names. In Writer's Island, we are writing around the room and making cards, pictures and our letters. At Reader's Reef, we are reading and listening to books in the pool. The students are so excited to be reading books just like everyone else. They didn't know it would be so easy... learn some letter sounds and put them together and bingo....they are reading! When you visit Science Sea, you can learn about the earth or look through some magnifying glasses. We have also been working hard in Science learning about animals' habitats and the places in the world where they live. Everyone loves Math Aquarium...where you can build with blocks, make patterns and put puzzles together. We are trying to write our numbers to 20 all by ourselves. When not working at centers, the kids enjoy working to try to stay still in their chair and do their best work to take home for mom's and dad's. Thanks for sharing your children with me. I have the best job there is with these sweet little girls and boys.

LIBRARY NEWS FROM MRS. HOUCK: We may not have had a new gym to play in first semester but we sure did keep busy reading NEW books! A big thank you goes out to all our benefactors that have made reading a pleasure for the students of Reading Elementary. Boxes have been arriving weekly thanks to our Amazon wish list and the great staff at Town Crier Bookstore. Parents and students that missed our annual Scholastic Book Fair this Fall, don't worry; we are scheduled to host a Scholastic Book Fair in the spring during Parent Teacher Conferences. This will enable Reading to purchase even more new books for the spring semester!



Merry Christmas from Reading School



Americus/ NLC

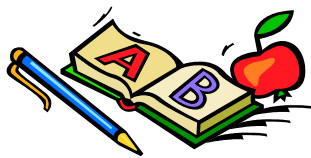


Mr. Dody's Corner:

What a fantastic year it has been so far! On November 14, we had our "Flipping Over Our Students' Success" pancake feed with Chris Cakes. Everyone had a great time and a good breakfast! Thank you to all the staff, students, and parents for all of your hard work. Congratulations to the following students for being selected as the students of the month: October – Abby Doudna (8th grade) and Kyndal Collins (1st grade). November – Tyler Ross (8th grade) and Olivia Hamlin (4th grade). Keep up the great work! Parents, please remember to dress your students appropriately for the changing weather and remember to send coats, hats, and gloves to school with them as the weather continues to get colder. The jr. high held its academic assembly earlier this month and I am proud to report that 18 students made the All A Honor Roll and 40 students made the B Honor Roll. That means that over 60% of the jr high students made the honor roll the first nine weeks!

Mrs. Kuhn's First Grade Class

We have been talking about Thanksgiving and the many things we are thankful for. The Emporia dispatchers came to our classroom to talk to us about how to call 911. We have been learning different strategies to add numbers. We are working hard on learning our sight words and reading in our reading books. In science we have finished our study of the solar system. We had another nutrition lesson with the "purple ladies" that we enjoyed. Hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving.



NLC JUNIOR CATS BASKETBALL—Basketball is off to a fast start. The North Lyon County Junior Cats have already played 3 games this season. The girls are currently undefeated destroying their competition against Chase County and Lyndon. The boys have lost the last three games but have been in every game so far. Both teams are practicing extremely hard and are looking for a successful basketball season this year. So come out and cheer on your NLC Wildcat basketball teams because there are only 2 home games left.

Coach Chanley

Counselor Comments~ Mrs. Aimee Landgren

During the last week of October, Americus and NLC students participated in **Red Ribbon Week**. Our theme for the week was **"PAWS"itively: Drug Free**. The students were involved in several activities throughout the week. Each day the students were given items to keep such as red ribbons, suckers, pencils, and stickers with the weekly theme printed on them. The students also had a chance to win other prizes if they wore their red ribbons when their name was called over the morning intercom. Each day was a different dress up theme, and students and staff enjoyed that part of the week. We began the week by the student leadership team and STUCO group decorating the outside of the school with Red Ribbons. The students also participated in signing a pledge to be drug free. They signed a PAW print that is displayed in their hallway. We held a canned food drive to help fill the area church pantries for the winter. On Wednesday, Trooper Rick Wingate came to present about the importance of wearing seat belts. Students in 3rd-8th grade had the chance to ride in the convincer to see what it would be like to crash at 5 miles per hour. We finished the week by having the students guess which teacher or staff members' baby picture was. The week was very enjoyable and eventful with the positive message of staying drug free.



Continue to check the Counselor's Office web page at www.usd251.org for updated events and stories/pictures from the Elementary Character Assemblies as well as the Junior High Honor Roll Assemblies.

News from Dr. Cottenmyre

- Elementary PE classes have been busy. Third through fifth grades have finished their archery unit with activities like tic-tac-toe, wand archery, flight shooting and shooting balloons with candy inside. Kindergarten through second grades have been learning some fun fitness songs that include working on loco-motor skills like walking, skipping, hopping and jumping.
- Eighth grade Math has been working on addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of fractions, prime factorization, exponents and scientific notation.
- Sixth graders continue to work on typing skills. Our last lessons are on using numbers, symbols and punctuation marks. Most students reached their 1st nine week's Reading goals. Thanks to all of you who have encouraged your children to read at home. It is greatly appreciated.
- Elective French students have worked hard to learn their names and numbers 0-30.
- Greetings, pronouns and lotto are some of our next units.

Northern Heights

The logo features a detailed black and white illustration of a wildcat's head, facing left with its mouth wide open, showing sharp teeth and a red tongue. The illustration is positioned to the left of the main title text.

New School Spirit Plan

The culmination of Heights' Student Council and underclassmen leaders' day at the ESU Youth Leadership Day, Oct. 26, was the development of an "Action Plan for School Spirit." Senior Michael Hawthorne and Junior Brittney Houck presented the plan to over 200 other high school students from around the state. The young leaders had worked with ESU leadership students to develop plans to make a difference in their schools and communities. The day's activities included interactive and effective leadership challenges. The conference was free to the students and was an excellent example of our students exhibiting self-awareness, confidence and purpose as Wildcats of NHHS, said StuCo sponsor Lori Houck. StuCo will continue to work on the plan for presentation to the whole school, she added.

ESU Mathematics Day

Each fall, selected Northern Heights students get to put their math skills to the test against the "best of the best" from around the state at ESU Mathematics Day. This year over 550 students, separated into two divisions, competed in the day-long event. Competitions were on individual and team basis.

The Wildcats' results were impressive, said sponsor Lori Turner, with many students placing and other students participating for the first time. Results were: Hanna Berry, 8th in Geometry, Individual; Payton DeLong, 26th in Algebra, Individual; Payton DeLong, Moriah Miner, and Natasha VanGundy, 7th in Algebra, Team; Hanna Berry, Michael Hawthorne, and Luke Larson, 7th in Math Scramble.

Scholar's Bowl Team Medals

The Northern Heights Scholar's Bowl won 4th place at the Babson Invitational Tournament on Saturday November 12 in Eureka. A four-way tie for second place in pool play resulted in Heights winning the head-to-head comparisons and advancing to the semi-finals. The Wildcats then lost to Wichita East II and Bishop Carroll of Wichita, which placed second and third at the 16-team tournament.

The team members who medaled included Senior Michael Hawthorne, Juniors Alexis Atchison, Hanna Berry and Luke Larson, Sophomore Corrie Hawthorne, and Freshman Neil Huffman. The next tournament in which the Wildcats will compete is the qualifying round of Quest on Saturday, December 3, at Washburn University.

Senior Citizens Christmas Dinner

Invitations have been mailed for the annual Senior Citizens Christmas Dinner on Dec. 9 at noon. The FACS classes have started plans for their annual quick breads gifts, and the art department students are working on their holiday pin gifts. Additionally, art students are working on the centerpieces to be given away and decorations for the school building. A new wrinkle this year will be the drawing for two handcrafted cutting boards that Scott Starkey, industrial arts instructor, has made.

Seniors 62 years of age and older are invited to attend. Any district patron who has not received an invitation and qualifies is asked to call the school office, 528-3521. Busses will transport from Reading and Americus if needed.

The menu includes turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes and gravy, fruit salad, green beans, frozen strawberry dessert and homemade rolls. Bob Moews, music and band director, said the choir and band will perform during the dinner.

Students will escort diners, as well as help serve and deliver meals to the homebound. Santa Claus is expected to attend.

Scrimshaw in Kansas? Materials are needed for an upcoming art department project. Donations of cattle horns or deer antlers are requested. They will be sanded down and etched, in much the same way whale bones were once carved into scrimshaw.

They "Flipped" Over Our Scores: To recognize student achievement on the state standardized assessments, the administration hosted Chris Cakes at the High School on Nov. 16. Students participated in the flapjack flipping show after they ate their fill of pancakes and sausage. Chris Cakes was assisted by principal Doug Boline, as well as members of the district administration.

Northern Heights earned the Standard of Excellence ratings in Reading and Math during the 2010-2011 school year.

November Students of the Month

Earning honors this month are Garrett Schumann, senior; Natasha VanGundy, junior; Fionna Colpan, sophomore, and Neal Huffman, freshman.

Book Fair in the Library

Parents, staff and students took advantage of the first-ever Scholastic High School Book Fair held during the month of October. The library was able to purchase 14 new titles and 10 were purchased for donation. Media Specialist Lori Houck thanked everyone who "supports our culture of reading at NHHS."

16 Travel to Manhattan

NHHS Theater class students attended Kansas State Theater Day on Wednesday, November 9. The students attended classes in improvisational acting, and stage combat and character development. They ate lunch in the student union before attending a performance of "The Adding Machine," a surreal farce.

Seasonal Music Program

The Northern Heights music department's annual Christmas Concert will be held at 7 p.m. on Dec. 14. The concert is free.