



USD 251 NORTH LYON COUNTY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2012

COMMENTS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

A few weeks ago, the school district won a highly coveted and sought after award. No, I'm not talking about either the junior high or high school girls tournament championships, even though those were great accomplishments! What I'm referring to is the Governor's Achievement Award that was earned by Northern Heights High School. This is a very elite award, not because of its title, but due to the stringent requirements required to achieve it. In fact, the standards are so high that of the 348 high schools in Kansas, only 18 received this honor. These schools met the Standard of Excellence in both Reading and Math for 2011, must have made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in both reading and mathematics, and graduation rate in 2011, and they must have been among the top 5 percent of schools in both reading and mathematics on the 2011 state assessments. Interestingly, at a time when the political theme seems to be "bigger is better," the list of winning schools is dominated by small, rural Kansas schools – just like us! And, since our district is often compared to our neighbors, how did they do? Not one made the high school list. In fact, only one other school in the area received recognition, that being in the junior high/middle school category. This was truly a district award and it is important to point out that, while NHHS is named on the plaque, those students didn't suddenly become exceptional overnight. A majority of those kids progressed through our elementary and junior high classes, learning from dedicated and caring educators, and were exposed to a meaningful and rigid curriculum. With the support of caring and involved parents, they grew into the responsible young adults who earned this award. The entire NLC community should share in this award and take great pride in our students' success. We have a great school district and don't let anyone tell you otherwise!

A complete list of schools can be found on the KSDE website or by pasting the address below into your web browser:

<http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=36&ctl=Details&mid=1030&ItemID=588>

Adequate Yearly Progress - AYP

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is a method for determining the progress of school buildings, districts and the state in meeting the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) goal of having 100 percent of students proficient in reading and math by 2014. To meet AYP measures, annual targets for performance on the Reading and Math State Assessments must be met, as well as goals for participation on the assessments. These targets must be met not only by the all-student population of schools, districts and the state, but also by each subgroup of students. A subgroup is any group of 30 or more students that can be identified by characteristics related to ethnicity, income level, English proficiency, or special needs. Improvements in attendance and graduation rates among the all-student population are also necessary to make AYP. For the 2010 – 2011 school year, all of the North Lyon County schools met the AYP requirements. The following paragraphs reflect the district all-student averages for reading and math as well as the yearly goals for AYP until the year 2014. During the 2010-2011 school year, the Kansas Reading and Math Assessments were administered to all students in grades 3 –8. At Northern Heights High School, grade 11 student scores were used to calculate AYP.

In math, 92.8% of the North Lyon County students scored proficient or above. The state performance target for grades K–12 math was 82.3%. By building*, the total math scores are as follows: Americus Grade School – 92% proficient, and Reading Grade School – 96.8% proficient, with the state K – 8 target as 86.7%. In grades 9-12, the state performance target for math was 82.3%. Northern Heights High School juniors were 96.6% proficient.

In reading, 96% of the North Lyon County students scored proficient or above. The state performance target for reading was 86%. In grades K-8, the state performance target for reading was 87.8%. By building*, the total reading scores are as follows: Americus Grade School – 95.7%, and Reading Grade School – 93.5% proficient. In grades 9-12, the state performance target for reading was 86%. Northern Heights High School juniors were 100% proficient.

The Building Report Cards are located at www.ksde.org – next to "Most Requested Topics," select "Building Report Card." Click on "School/District," and locate North Lyon County. The Kansas Report Card is a collection of school performance data compiled annually by the Kansas State Department of Education to provide information not only on a statewide basis but also by district and by building.

We are extremely proud of the progress that our students are making and the successes that they continue to achieve! The teachers continue to strive to help our students improve and meet the yearly goals that have been set by the Kansas State Department of Education. The teachers and students are busy preparing for the 2012 Kansas Assessments testing window, which is February 15 through April 13.

*If you desire scores for individual classes, please contact your building principal.

Reading

Principal's Pen

By Peggy Fort

THERE IS NO PLACE LIKE USD 251

The character trait for February is

Self-Discipline.

Controlling of one's own thoughts and behavior. Before you do it, ask yourself...is it necessary? Is it kind? Is it right? The color of the month is pink.

KANSAS STATE ASSESSMENTS 2012

The Kansas State Board of Education has established curricular standards for all students in the core subjects of reading, mathematics, science, social studies and writing. The standards are general statements of what students should know and be able to do at various grade levels and are provided to schools as a guide in preparing curriculum.

Assessments were developed by the State of Kansas to ensure students are meeting the expectations established by the State Board. Students at all accredited schools in the state are required to participate in the assessments.

Grades three through five will be taking the Math and Reading Kansas State Assessment in February and March. Fourth grade will take the Science Assessment in March.

This time of the school year seems to be the annual test taking time. I would like to pass along some tips that might make these stressful days easier for your students.

Test Taking Tips

- Get a good night's sleep before the test.
- Have a nutritious breakfast.
- Dress comfortably.
- Bring all materials you need.
- Relax...take slow, deep breaths.
- Follow directions carefully.
- Read each question.
- Answer the easy questions first.
- Move on if you don't know an answer.
- Mark answers carefully.
- Review to make sure you've answered every question.
- Don't change any answers unless you are sure they are wrong.



Please remember to help your child dress according to the weather. The students will have recess outside as the weather permits. Even with inside recess, please send with your child a coat, hat and gloves. If your family does not have these items, please let your child's teacher know.

In case of severe weather, school closings will be broadcast over radio stations WIBW in Topeka, KVOE in Emporia and KANS 92.9 in Emporia. Notices will also be announced over television channels 13, 27, and 49 in Topeka and through the School Reach automated telephone system.



SECOND GRADE WITH MRS. WILEY:

The second grade has learned and done so many great things since the beginning of the year. Currently we are working on addition with regrouping, Kansas history (Plains Indians and Pioneers), verbs, and reading poetry.

We would like to welcome ESU intern, Mr. Phil Metz from Emporia. While he is with us this semester he will start teaching subtraction with regrouping, the human body and health, as well as many other exciting things.

FIFTH GRADE WITH MRS. EDWARDS:

Busy, busy, busy! That is the only way to describe what is happening in the fifth grade room right now. We are busy practicing for state assessments by doing reading and math formative tests. They will show us what we still need to work on before March 6 when we start testing. We are busy reading and writing tall tales. Symmetry, graphs, GCF and LCM are swirling through our heads. We are busy making the coolest volcano that really erupted. All the while Christopher Columbus, the Vikings, and other explorers are vying for our attention. We are learning so much right now that our heads might EXPLODE if we are not careful. But...we really love to be busy!

MUSICAL NOTES FROM MRS. GAY:

The students have finally recovered from putting together a wonderful Winter Concert in December. A special thank you to the students for working so hard to make the concert a success and for the wonderful parents and family members coming to support our music program! The students have only been back in school for a little bit, but we have already started many new concepts in class. Our K-1 students are learning a lot about high/low, fast/slow and one and two sounds to a beat. The 2nd-5th grade classes have had many opportunities to play different instruments in class and are learning about dynamics and tempo as well. At the beginning of February our 4th grade students will start learning how to play recorders and read music and 3rd graders will gradually learn flutaphones. Many more exciting things are yet to come and we look forward to upcoming preparations for our Spring Concert.



★ 2011 STAR PERFORMER & WOW AWARDS ★

★ Deadline for nominations is: March 15, 2012. The nomination form is available on the district's website at www.usd251.org.

★ Mail, fax or deliver to:

★ Kathy Dreier, P.O. Box 527, 614 Main Street, Americus, KS 66835

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





Mr. Dody's Corner:

Congratulations to Coach Becker, Coach Fort, and the NLC Jr. Lady Cats for beating Council Grove in double overtime in the championship game of the Flint Hills Junior League to bring home the league championship. Way to go, girls! The boys beat West Franklin to finish fifth in the league. Both the boys and the girls had a fantastic season and I am extremely proud of our coaches and athletes.

The NLC Jr. High held its honor assembly for the second nine weeks and over 65% of the student body made either the A or B Honor Roll. This is a fantastic achievement that speaks highly of our students, teachers, and parents. Thank you all for your dedication and hard work! Keep up the great work!!



Mrs. Kuhn's First Grade Class

We are settling back in the school routine after winter break. We have an intern from Emporia State University. Her name is Ms. Hulsing. We have started taking Accelerated Reader tests. At first our goal is for each student to take one test each week. In social studies we have been talking about Kansas and have been working in our Kansas books. We are now taking spelling tests and we are doing a good job on them. In math we are working on number patterns and learning our math facts. We wish everybody a great New Year!



Counselor Comments: Mrs. Aimee Landgren

We are off to a busy start since the holiday break. Elementary students are continuing to focus on the character trait of FAIRNESS. An assembly was held on January 25th to recognize those individual elementary students who have demonstrated FAIRNESS at school. The students will receive a certificate and an orange dog tag.

We are finishing the TOO GOOD For VIOLENCE Curriculum in grades K-3 and beginning it in 4th and 5th grade. The students have been working on conflicts and how to solve them peacefully by sharing their feelings with "I" Messages, using self-control, and looking at conflicts from the other person's point of view.

On the 13th of January, the middle school students celebrated their second nine weeks successes in an Honors Assembly. There were 64 students who made the "A" Honor Roll and "B" Honor Rolls and were recognized with a certificate and pencil. We've already begun to look toward the third nine weeks. We will have a .5 club and recognize any student who raises his/her GPA .5 or greater at the next Honors Assembly.

The junior high students began Project TEEN this month with Kenda O'Mara. The students always look forward to these lessons and discussions about their real life situations. As part of the class, the students will be asked to discuss with their parents/guardians the various topics they participate in.

Finally, I will be going on maternity leave beginning in February. I will be returning after spring break. If you need to schedule a SIT meeting, please feel free to contact your child(s) teacher or Mr. Dody.

Social Studies With Mr. Chanley

Christmas is over and we are in full swing into second semester. It will be just a matter of time before we are out for spring break. I have some exciting news for the families of North Lyon County. This semester we will be having a student teacher in the classroom and her name is Myla Heston.

Myla is from Oskaloosa, Kansas, and graduated from Oskaloosa High School in 2008. Myla is currently a senior at Emporia State University majoring in Secondary Education for Social Sciences. She will be graduating in May 2012. Myla is involved in several on-campus activities including Phi Beta Lambda (college business club equivalent to FBLA), Phi Alpha Theta (History honors club), and captain for an Up 'til Dawn team (fundraiser for St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital). When Myla is not working on school work, she enjoys reading, watching movies, and sporting activities.

We are extremely happy to have Myla in the classroom and the students will really enjoy the activities with her in the near future.

Northern Heights



Governor's Achievement Award

Northern Heights was one of only 18 high schools in the state of Kansas to be recognized with a Governor's Achievement Award. The award was given for the 2011 state assessment scores, as well as other criteria that the school met. To acknowledge the students' hard work and achievements, a special activity is being planned. Additionally, the student body was notified of the award at an assembly, at which their picture was taken, along with a faculty picture. Those poster-size pictures are on display in the school lobby.

January Students of the Month

Kimberly Smith, senior; Cole West, junior; Krystyna Coop, sophomore, and Megan French, freshman were named the January Students of the Month.

In the Workshop

The Industrial Arts Club has some fundraisers coming up that I think everyone will enjoy. We will be taking orders for the Cupid's Heart figure to be ready for delivery before Valentines Day. They are made of solid oak and display a three dimensional heart with an arrow through it. The club will also be raffling off cutting boards during the winter sports royalty basketball game. Some very unique designs will be available. Through the month of January a few Industrial Arts projects, along with the Art projects, will continue to be on displayed at the Emporia Library.

Scott Starkey

Northern Heights Ladycat Basketball

The girls have had a great season so far and I am very proud of them. After finishing in 2nd Place at the Herington Pre-Season tournament, went on a six-game winning streak and have a 9-1 record. During this stretch we finished undefeated in league play and have won the regular season league title. This was one our goals at the beginning of the season, and I am glad to see the girls rewarded for all of their hard work. We still have a lot of games left this season and are continuing to work hard and get better. We hope to see you at a game, come out and support Ladycat basketball.

Coach Tim Riemann

Counselor's Office

Information about scholarships, colleges and universities are available on Mr. Bowen's counselor site on the school website. Information is updated regularly.

FCCLA

Fifteen students will be representing Northern Heights High School at the FCCLA District Elections and Star events. Delegates will vote on their 2012-13 officers and nine projects will be presented. Madison Dragonas and Chrissy Parks will present "One Way to Play, Drug-Free." Cheyenne Savage and Corrie Hawthorne are conducting a Nutrition Analysis of their class. Michelle Ankerholtz is using her experience from her Kindergarten internship at Americus to present a Teach and Train portfolio. Savanna Chestnut is speaking on "Self-Esteem" to eighth graders at Americus. Warren Ruhl and Dakota Williams led an activity in the lunch room called "Toss it up Tuesday" to encourage students to interact with each other. Allyson Thompson is using her job experience and teacher's aide experience to present a project on "Leadership." Abbie Lyon will present her career investigation in "Cosmetology" followed by a mock job interview. Katie Yingst's career investigation in "Nursing" will include her Flint Hills Technical experience.

Moriah Miner and Hailey Anstey are educating girls on the effects of "Aggression Relationships." Along with their project, we brought in a speaker to speak about the signs and prevention of suicide. Brad Burnett of Denver spoke to approximately 75 students about his experience in dealing with this process with his son. He went through a training to show students how to respond and get help. The projects will be presented before judges on February 1st in Yates Center.

Forensics Judges Needed

NHHS Forensics will host the Jonathan Adee Memorial Invitational Forensics Tournament on Saturday, February 4, 2012. Schools from the Flint Hills League and surrounding area will participate. **Volunteers from the North Lyon County community are needed to help judge at the tournament!** No experience is needed, just the ability to listen and give advice to participants. Judges will be needed from 7:30 am to 2:30 pm that day. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Offered events will be the following: Informative Speaking, Original Oration, Extemporaneous Speaking, Interpretation of Prose, Interpretation of Poetry, Solo Acting Serious, Solo Acting Humorous, Duet Acting, and Improvised Duet Acting. For more information, or to volunteer to judge, please contact Sarah Fehr Malcolm at NHHS (620) 528-3521 or malcolms@usd251.org.

CRUSH TIME!

Do you have a "Crush" on someone? It's hard to believe, but Valentines Day is around the corner and the Art Department will be selling Crush items for \$2.50 and \$3.00 (if you want to keep it a secret). Order early, as this year, there will be a limited amount!

