



Northwood-Kensett Community School District

VIKING DISPATCH

January 2017

Creating healthy, educated, ethical and productive citizens.

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PO BOX 289

1200 1st Ave N.

Northwood, IA 50459

Phone:

(641) 324-1127 (Elementary)

(641) 324-2021 (Superintendent)

(641) 324-2142 (High School)

Administration

Michael R. Crozier, Superintendent

Brian Costello, Elementary Principal

Keith Fritz, Secondary Principal

School Board Members

Larry Hovey

Susan Kliment

Cindy Pangburn

Roger Harris

John Anderson

FROM THE DESK OF MR. CROZIER

Facility Needs

As we enter the cold and frosty winter season, we are reminded how badly we need a new heating system at the secondary building. The heating system in the secondary building is 55 years old. It has more than outlasted its expected lifetime, but that lifetime is nearing the end. We are hoping to nurse it through this winter and one more. The challenge for the Board of Education will be deciding the type of system to install and whether or not we add air conditioning at that time. Cost and efficiency will be two major considerations when making this decision.

The Northwood-Kensett Board of Education will be holding two workshops; one in January and one in February. The goal of the January workshop will be to determine what type of heating and cooling system will be used. The February workshop will be used to determine how the district will finance the project.

Another building that has outlasted its lifetime is the Ag and Industrial Arts building. The fact that it is not attached to the main building also presents problems. It is not optimal to have students going into the winter elements to get to class. The other problem that this creates, is the inability to totally lock down the secondary campus in case of an emergency. There are plans to demolish this building and attach a new structure to the main building on the southwest corner.

Holiday Fundraiser

I want to thank the Northwood-Kensett staff for their participation in the Holiday Jeans Fundraiser. We raised over \$900.00 that will be given to nine families in the community that can use a little help during the holiday season. I am proud to be a part of such a caring staff.

FROM THE DESK OF MR. FRITZ

At a recent District Advisory Committee meeting, Mr. Crozier asked the parents and community members who were there, "What more can N-K Schools do to best educate our young people?"

Secretly, in my corner of the room, in my mind I was thinking, "Please someone say *financial literacy* or *personal finance*." My fingers were crossed under the table, hoping others were seeing the need that I had come to see, also.

Lo and behold, a parent spoke out in response to Mr. Crozier's question with the answer I was hoping to hear: "What about a class in personal finance?"

For a while, starting with a question from our counselor Mrs. Hansen, and filtering through students, and then some parents, I'd been hearing of a concern that our graduates were moving out into the Great Wide World without a solid sense of what it takes to manage a checkbook, apply for a loan, understand interest rates, and wisely manage their own financial well-being.

Not all students suffer from this deficit, certainly. Most of our students who own and manage their own livestock typically have a good understanding of money management. And those who began working at a young age and whose parents cause them to pay their own cell phone bills, car payments, fuel costs--those kids manage their finances pretty well, too.

But not all students have that experience (in my observation, most don't), and even the most savvy senior in high school hasn't had to apply for a home loan or project the cost of their college education.

There is much to do in order for this vision of a Personal Finance Course to become a reality: teachers need to develop the course content, I need to come up with a plan for phasing in a new requirement like this so it fits into a student's schedule well, and of course the school board needs to approve of it.

But if all of that work comes together, N-K will have again raised expectations for graduation in a way that will help our graduates no matter what they choose to do in life after high school. I would love to hear your thoughts on this; please call, write, or stop in any time to talk.



FROM THE DESK OF MR. COSTELLO

Happy New Year!

Can you believe we are half way through the 2016-2017 school year? Before we know it spring break will be upon us and not far behind is summer! Before we get too caught up in this fast paced year, I want to extend a “Thank You” for attending the winter concerts. One of the many things I enjoy about our concerts is watching the kids search for loved ones while standing on the risers ---And the big smile when they make eye contact. They literally beam with pride and sing a little louder knowing they’ve found you.

As we enter the second half of the school year, I want to touch on a couple significant assessments that will be coming up. The winter testing window for the FAST Assessment will start January 16. This assessment is the accountability measure for the Early Literacy legislation. Parents of K-3 students received information about their students’ scores from the fall testing during our Parent-Teacher Conferences. Parents should pay particular attention to the results after each testing season because they do have implications on summer school participation and possible retention at the end of third grade. The other assessment I want to mention is the Iowa Assessments (formally called ITBS/ITED). This assessment will be administered mid-March. This is the last year we will be required to administer this assessment. During the 2017-2018 school year the Iowa Assessments will be replaced by the Smarter Balanced assessment. We’ll continue to update you about this change in future newsletters and notes home.

As you can see, there is a lot on the horizon. Our staff continues to work hard to ensure our children receive high quality education. Please don’t hesitate to contact us if you have questions.

Wishing you a wonderful 2017.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

CHANGES IN OUR STATE ASSESSMENTS by: Kimberly Odegaard and Beth Butler

We're half-way through the first year of implementing the Teacher Leadership Program. Here are a few statistics to show how the program is working at N-K:

- 7 new teachers have observed and been observed by 4 Mentor Teachers, for a total of 14 Mentor/Mentee observations
- 11 observations of veteran teachers observing colleagues followed with reflective discussion
- 4 mini-lessons regarding instruction and assessment have been presented to staff by the Model Teachers
- 4 book club discussions have occurred with the Director of Curriculum & Innovation and Mentors/Mentees
- 6 teachers have collaborated one-on-one with the Instructional Coach in a formal 6-8 week coaching cycle
- 1 Coaching Lab was hosted at N-K, allowing other instructional coaches and administrators from the area to observe how the program works in our district



WHAT IS GOING ON IN FIFTH GRADE

By: Ryan Severson and Greg Parks

It's hard to believe the 1st semester has already ended. The fifth graders have had a great first half and are looking forward to the 2nd semester. We have accomplished a lot already this year and hope to continue moving forward. Below are some of the highlights from our 1st semester.

Dan Block spent some time doing hands-on activities with the 5th graders this year. In science we started off the year learning about the sun, moon, and planets. We spent some time learning about the different constellations and at the end of the unit he brought the star-lab to school. The star-lab is a large dome in which the night sky is projected onto its ceiling and walls. It was really neat viewing all of the constellations we learned about in class. Dan also visited the 5th grade social studies classes and made arrowheads with the students. The kids had a great time doing this!

Our most recent project has been the annual Christmas food drive for MANNA. The entire school is involved in this project because homerooms compete to see which class can collect the most items. As a Character Counts school, this activity is just one of the many ways we demonstrate the 6 pillars of Character. The 5th and 6th graders collect, count, and sort all of the donations. At the end of the collect period, the homeroom that has collected the most items delivers all of the collected items to MANNA. This year we collected 1,026 items, GREAT JOB EVERYONE!!

ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR

By: Steve Hartman

I recently read an article on the National Federation of High School Sports website about the shortage of officials and umpires across the nation. And yes, once again I am writing about the need for officials and what we can do to recruit and retain officials and umpires.

I believe that we are at edge of a crisis here in Iowa with our officials. At this time, we are able to get officials for our games in this area but I know that in western Iowa, they are postponing games because they do not have officials to cover their contests. If you have been to a game lately, you know that our officials are not getting any younger. Soon these aging officials will be hanging up their whistles and we do not have younger officials waiting in the wings to replace them.

What can be done to avert this crisis? First, if you or someone you know has an interest in officiating, get in touch with me. I will then help you get registered and get you connected with the North Iowa Officials Association.

Okay, so you do not want to be an official or umpire, I understand, it's not for everyone but you can still help. The number one reason the young officials get out, is because they do not like people yelling at them. We need to stop treating officials like the enemy. Instead we need to build a culture where officials feel welcomed and appreciated. Have you ever told an official or umpire "thank you" or "nice job tonight"? Most officials get into it to help students; don't you generally thank people that help your children?

I know that every call the officials make, isn't the correct call but I can tell you this, they did not make that bad call on purpose. They want to make the correct call. Just like you or me they do not want to make a mistake in front of everyone. If you set back and look at the game objectively, most of the calls the officials make are right. But if we continue to yell at officials for every call they make against our team, we are driving them right out of the game.

So the next time you are at a game, and you have the opportunity to thank an official, tell them that you appreciate what they are doing for young people. If you know someone who wants to get into the game encourage them to do so. It will be a sad day when we have to postpone or cancel games because there are not enough officials to work them because if things do not change, I believe that's in the near future.

Go Vikings!

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

By: Amy Hansen

By the time this article is published, it will be second semester here at Northwood-Kensett! At the risk of sounding trite, it's always surprising how quickly the time goes, and it seems to move more and more quickly each year. There is one specific way that this year *is* going more quickly than other years, and that is college planning and decision making for Seniors.

I was surprised that many colleges moved up their preferred FAFSA & scholarship deadline up to first semester because of the new changes in the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA.) Students who want the best chance of scholarships and financial aid were encouraged to have their FAFSA submitted by December 1st at both Iowa State University and the University of Iowa this year— much earlier than the March 1st deadline last year.

Who does this affect? Students who are reluctant to make college decisions as seniors will be even more behind this year, with most deadlines pushed up several months. Students who are procrastinating in making a post-secondary decision for next year may see less options in several college-planning variables including orientation, class scheduling, and student housing, as other students across the state and nation secure their spots earlier in the school year.

Students in 10th & 11th grade should consider what they can do to get a head start on their college decision making process so they're ready when 12th grade rolls around. Students who are well-informed and have done their due diligence in the college & career planning process will be more confident in making an early decision.

That said, I never encourage students to rush into a decision they don't feel comfortable with. It is better to make a confident decision later on in the school year than it is to rush into a decision that they are not committed to and will likely regret as their college career begins. All students are entitled to make decisions in their own time, as long as they acknowledge that colleges operate on their own schedule, as well.

COUNSELOR'S CORNER (Continued)

By: Ashley Williams

In Guidance throughout December, we have discussed and completed activities surrounding the Respect and Responsibility pillars of character. As we move into December, we will continue to talk about Responsibility. We will also begin to talk about and complete activities that focus on fairness.

We have also continued to discuss ways we can be caring to one another.

We talked about ways that we can be kind and caring to others without spending money. Ideas that were suggested included giving high fives, making cards for others, giving compliments and donating items that we no longer use or need that others could benefit from.

Many small groups that were formed first semester have ended and new ones will start when we return from winter break. If you feel your student would benefit from being a part of a small group, please let me know. Topics may include making and keeping friends, listening skills, study skills and organization, and many more. Small groups meet for 20-30 minutes once every 6 days. The times groups meet are arranged with teachers to ensure students are not missing out on crucial information in the classroom.

As always, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. You can reach me by email at awilliams@nkvikings.com or by phone at 641-324-1127 ext. 216!

JR. & SR. HIGH STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

Morgan Johnson, Jaci Godinez, Emily Follmuth, Evelyn Ocel, Jaela Parks, Denali Herbert, Madison Shoger, Isaac Renteria, Angel Martin, Miranda Stambaugh, John Olson, Austin Foss, Trey Waldemar, Grace Stoneking, Molly Hunchis, Olivia Stilley, Sarah Yezek, Sidney Quam, Warren Cooper, Rachel Hill, Tristan Rothove, Madelyn Berge, Brett Bachtle, Alex Eilertson, Jeremiah Erickson.

NURSE'S CORNER

By: Heather Rheingans

I feel it's safe to say that we have had a successful 1st part of the school year in terms of health and wellness, as there have been very few absences due to illness. However, with 1st semester down and winter just beginning, I wanted to take this time to remind you about the school's policy in regards to keeping your child home due to illness.

WHEN TO KEEP CHILD AT HOME

Although we strongly encourage daily attendance at school, we also believe that students should not attend school when they are ill. When your child exhibits the following signs, we request that he/she not be in school:

- 1) Generalized flu symptoms, low grade fever, achiness, and chills.
- 2) Diarrhea and vomiting. (If your child has these symptoms in the evening, it is wise to give him/her the next day to completely recover). Sometimes returning to school too soon only prolongs the illness.
- 3) Respiratory symptoms, frequent deep cough, green nasal drainage, fever, chest discomfort.
- 4) Rashes/Skin Lesions. Any lesion that is warm, streaking or has drainage that cannot be contained (scabies, impetigo and chicken pox). Ringworm that is not able to be covered.
- 5) Two or more of the following: Abdominal pain/diarrhea, fever of 101 or greater, swollen lymph nodes, white patches on the tonsils, redness to soft palate, scalp ringworm.

Parents are requested to contact the school as soon as possible when a student will be absent due to illness. It's also helpful to leave a brief summary of symptoms so that I may track per grade or class to determine if we need to increase our disinfection practices or provide extra health education to a group of students. Parents are also request to contact the school as soon as possible when a diagnosis of a communicable disease has been made (whooping cough, influenza, etc).

Any student that is out of school for an illness that includes a fever must be fever free without the use of acetaminophen or ibuprofen for 24 hours. If your child has been ill during the school day, we request that he or she not attend or participate in any school sponsored event that evening.

By following the school policy, you not only help your child recover quicker, but also help us by preventing the spread of illness.

TRANSPORTATION DIRECTOR

By: Daryl Love

A couple of quick notes to pass along for bus riders. With the winter weather here to stay for a while, I would like to ask those of you whose driveways are used as a turnaround to please remember that we need to have them cleaned for the buses; please keep them as wide as possible. We have had some with a narrow car path, which makes it hard to turn around. I would also like to ask that if your student is NOT going to need a ride in the mornings that you please give us a call at the bus barn. The number is 324-1454. Please leave a message on the answering machine if I am not available. This way, we can save time and fuel waiting for no-shows while others on the route are waiting outside in the cold. Thank you for your help in these matters.

STUDENT OF THE MONTH

3rd & 4th Grade: (left to right) Ariana Heiken, Michael Erickson, Collin Houg, Kyle Buehrer

5th & 6th Grade: (left to right) Nolan Senne, Madalynn Hanson, Kylie Robinson, Elizabeth Ehrhardt

