



Palmer Public School



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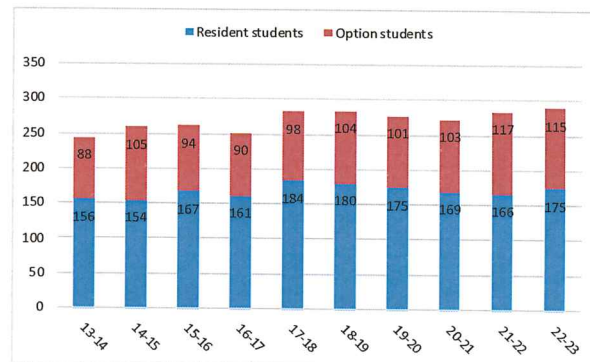
2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Following are some statistics and information about Palmer Public School. This report to the public is outlined in district policy and its content is prescribed in Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 10 (Rule 10); *Nebraska Rules and Regulations* governing the operation of schools. Much of the information contained relates to the 2022-23 School Year with information regarding prior years for purposes of comparison.

ENROLLMENT HISTORY

With regard to school finance, no factor applies greater influence than student enrollment, affecting state aid, per-pupil expenditure statistics, and staffing determinations. The chart below shows numbers of Resident students and Option students enrolled in K-12 at Palmer over the past 10 years. The enrollment count of K-12 students has fluctuated moderately during the past ten years.

During the ten-year period portrayed in the chart, the enrollment count of resident students and the option student enrollment count have both risen, resulting in an overall increase in enrollment of 19%. While districts of comparable size and makeup have endured large decreases in enrollment, Palmer Public School has maintained its overall student enrollment the past several years.



ENROLLMENT

The table on the right shows the enrollment by grade for the 2022-23 school year. In grades K-12, there are an average of 21.3 students per grade. With two class sections of preschool and 1st grade, the average class size in the elementary is 23.1 students. Including paraprofessionals, there are 10.9 elementary students per staff member. Palmer's low student to teacher ratio allows us to provide every student with individualized attention and support.

Grade	Students Enrolled 22-23	Grade	Students Enrolled 22-23
PreK	32	7th	15
Kdg	23	8th	25
1st	33	9th	20
2nd	25	10th	18
3rd	22	11th	18
4th	21	12th	16
5th	29		
6th	23		
Elem Total 208		Sec Total 112	
District Total 320			

DEMOGRAPHIC COMPARISONS

	Nebraska	Palmer
Free/Reduced Lunch	49.69%	52.48%
English Language Learners	8.37%	1.03%
Special Education Percentage	16.45%	12.41%
School Mobility Rate	5.60%	4.48%
Highly Mobile Students	3.97%	6.31%
Graduation Rate	87.25%	81.25%
Attendance Rate	92.50%	95.46%
Dropout Rate	1.40%	0.88%

The table on the left compares Palmer to the State on several demographic points. Palmer's rate for special education, and English Language Learners (students whose first language is not English) are below the state average, while students receiving free/reduced lunch (a measure of the poverty demographics) is slightly above the state average.

Any student who enrolls in two or more public schools during an academic year will be

considered a highly mobile student. Any child who enters or leaves school between October 1 and the last day of school is counted in the mobility rate. An individual child is counted only once and is divided by the K-12 Fall Membership count taken October 1. Example: A school building begins the year with 20 students. During the year three students move out and three students move in. The mobility number is six. Example: A school building begins the year with 25 students. During the year five students move out, but one of them returns. The mobility number is five. Palmer had a lower mobility rate but a higher rate of "highly mobile" students moving in and out during the 2022-23 school year than the state average.

Graduation rates are calculated on a cohort basis, which is calculated by dividing the number of students entering 9th grade by the number of students who graduate within four years (8 semesters). Palmer regularly exceeds the state average in this category, even though having small class sizes means one student could significantly decrease the figure. In 2022-23, the graduation rate was slightly below the state average.

Palmer's attendance rate is consistently better than the state average. This is due largely to parental support. School attendance is one of the most important variables in a student's success. This can also effect funding, because a large difference between Average Daily Membership and Average Daily Attendance can adversely affect state aid.

The dropout rate is calculated by dividing the total number of 7th-12th grade students who dropped out by the official fall enrollment for grades 7-12. Palmer has rarely had a student included in this statistic.

STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Information gleaned from Nebraska Student Centered Assessment System (NSCAS) helps identify areas where we most need to accelerate learning opportunities for our students. Direct comparisons of assessment data with previous years is not appropriate for many reasons:

- Changing nature of NSCAS Summative (movement to through-year adaptive)
- COVID impact on 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years:
 - Inability to accurately administer assessments to test students remotely
 - Uncertainty of impacts on teaching & learning.
 - Mixture of remote, in-person, and hybrid learning.

NSCAS Test Results: The data below are from the Nebraska Students-Centered Assessment System (NSCAS) tests, which are given in the spring of each year to students in grades 3 through 8.

The following table shows the "Percent Proficient" on NSCAS English Language Arts (ELA) for students in grades 3 through 8 only for All Students, and separated by Males, Females, and Students Eligible for Free and Reduced Meals.

NSCAS ELA	All Students		Males		Females		Students eligible for free/reduced lunch	
	Palmer	Nebraska	Palmer	Nebraska	Palmer	Nebraska	Palmer	Nebraska
2020-21	59%	48%	61%	45%	56%	51%	58%	33%
2021-22	55%	47%	54%	44%	57%	50%	58%	31%
2022-23	60%	58%	53%	55%	66%	61%	54%	43%

The following table shows the “Percent Proficient” on NSCAS math for students in grades 3-8 only.

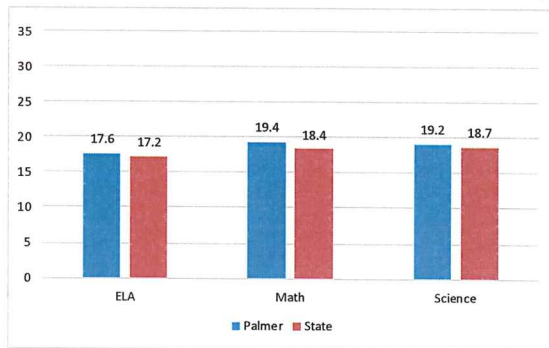
NSCAS Math	All Students		Males		Females		Students eligible for free/reduced lunch	
	Palmer	Nebraska	Palmer	Nebraska	Palmer	Nebraska	Palmer	Nebraska
2020-21	49%	46%	53%	47%	44%	45%	48%	29%
2021-22	53%	46%	52%	47%	54%	45%	50%	28%
2022-23	59%	61%	58%	62%	61%	59%	55%	45%

In 2020-21, the NSCAS Science test for 5th and 8th graders was a pilot test only and no results were reported. The NSCAS Science test is only given in 5th and 8th grades.

NSCAS Science	All Students		Males		Females		Students eligible for free/reduced lunch	
	Palmer	Nebraska	Palmer	Nebraska	Palmer	Nebraska	Palmer	Nebraska
2021-22	79%	66%	78%	66%	79%	67%	84%	51%
2022-23	76%	70%	68%	69%	87%	71%	74%	57%

ACT Test Results: The graph at right shows a four-year average performance history for Palmer students on the ACT with comparative data for the entire state. Like NSCAS, the ACT was not given in 2019-20. Beginning in 2017, the ACT test was required for all juniors in Nebraska. The ACT is a curriculum-based achievement test made up of separate exams in English, reading, writing, mathematics and science. It is scored on a scale of 1 to 36, with 36 being the highest possible score. ACT scores are accepted at virtually all colleges and universities across the nation.

ACT SCORE COMPARISON – 4 YEAR AVERAGE



FACULTY AND STAFF

The table below shows the Full-Time Equivalency (FTE) count of teachers for Palmer Public Schools over the past three years, along with the number and percentage of teachers who have earned advanced degrees.

Years	Total Teacher Count		Total Teachers with Master's Degrees		Percentage of Teachers with Master's Degrees	
	State	Palmer	State	Palmer	State	Palmer
2020-2021	23,985	25.51	13,635	12.50	56.85%	49.00%
2021-2022	23,692	25.70	13,831	10.70	57.72%	41.63%
2022-2023	23,687	25.19	13,799	11.50	58.25%	45.65%

The table at right shows both Average Years Experience and Average Salary for teachers in Palmer and the state average. Average teacher

Years	Average Years Experience		Average Teacher Salary	
	State	Palmer	State	Palmer
2020-21	13.95	13.15	\$56,582	\$53,385
2021-22	13.94	12.59	\$57,536	\$53,556
2022-23	13.86	13.81	\$58,923	\$56,584

salaries in comparison to the state change accordingly as Palmer's average years of experience increases or decreases; and as the percentage of Masters Degrees increases or decreases.

FINANCES: GENERAL FUND BUDGET, TAX LEVY, TAX ASKING

The largest single source of receipts for the District is property tax. The table at right shows the District's assessed valuation with a breakdown by county over the past four years, with this year's assessed valuation increasing 5.8%.

County	Assessed Valuation			
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Howard	\$43,171,433	\$43,031,232	\$44,500,564	\$50,558,786
Merrick	\$177,993,373	\$182,274,249	\$189,827,490	\$196,513,431
Nance	\$77,803,030	\$78,210,940	\$74,548,375	\$79,722,965
Total	\$298,967,836	\$303,516,421	\$308,876,429	\$326,795,182
% Change	-(2.64%)	1.52%	1.76%	5.80%

The table at right shows the General Fund budget requirements for the past three fiscal years as well as the current year. The General Fund is the

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
General Fund	\$5,162,334	\$5,291,392	\$5,451,034	\$5,609,109
Cash Reserve	\$629,209	\$720,350	\$1,382,440	\$1,651,270
Total Requirement	\$5,791,543	\$6,011,742	\$6,833,474	\$7,260,379
Expenditures	\$4,266,005	\$4,782,308	\$4,777,110	

District's day-to-day operating fund and does not include fiduciary funds such as those used to support activities (Activity Fund) and the Nutrition Fund, or the Bond Fund and Special Building Fund. The difference between budgeted amounts and audited expenditures is due to unforeseeable expenses over the course of the budget year, cash flow requirements, and varying needs for transfers from the General Fund and other funds within the General Fund, reflected as expenditures from the General Fund.

The table below shows the property tax rates, by fund, for the past three fiscal years and for the current year, as well as a calculation of the amount by which each levy changed. Note: Levies are expressed in dollars and cents per \$100 of valuation.

Fiscal Year	General Fund Levy	Bond Fund Levy	Special Building Fund Levy	QCPU Fund Levy	Total	Levy Change	Percent Levy Change
2020-2021	0.872751	0	0.0274	0.04105	0.941201	.049067	5.5%
2021-2022	0.894569	0	0.026989	0.042076	0.963634	.022432	2.38%
2022-2023	0.908484	0	0.015048	0.048189	0.971721	.008087	0.84%
2023-2024	0.877216	0	0.062263	0.003760	0.943239	-(.028482)	-(2.93)%

The table at right shows the recent history of the tax amounts the district has asked in support of Palmer Public Schools. The All Other Funds amount includes the General Fund asking as well as the Special Building and Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund (QCPUF) asking for debt payments.

Tax Asking	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Bonds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
All Other Funds	\$2,813,891	\$2,924,791	\$3,001,419	\$3,082,457
Total Asking	\$2,813,891	\$2,924,791	\$3,001,419	\$3,082,457

The District's State Aid over the last four years is presented at right. State aid to Palmer Public Schools decreased for years before rebounding in 2018-19. The decreases can be attributed to state budget cuts, and increases in property valuations, which increased the amount of local resources calculated in the state aid formula. From 2015 to 2020, the district was "Non-equalized", meaning we received no State Aid for equalization, and received state aid only for option enrollment students and the income tax rebate. Starting in 2020-21, the district again received equalization aid due to decreases in property valuations which decreased the amount of local resources.

Fiscal Year	State Aid	Difference	% Change from previous
2020-2021	\$1,295,638	\$293,456	29.28%
2021-2022	\$1,417,873	\$122,235	9.4%
2022-2023	\$1,443,890	\$26,017	1.83%
2023-2024	\$1,721,292	\$277,402	19.21%

In comparing 2020 receipts to 2023 receipts, we see the level of support from each source remained relatively stable, with local support decreasing and state and federal support increasing. The cost associated with the federal and state requirements for data tracking, assessment, and reporting continued to increase. The increase in federal funding is due to covid-relief aid from the CARES act, the COVID relief package, and the American Rescue Plan.

FSY 2019-20		Funding Source	FSY 2022-23	
% Total	Receipted		Receipted	% Total
58.4%	\$2,412,889	Local Sources	\$2,609,940	53.8%
0.33%	\$13,790	County/ESU Sources	\$18,181	0.37%
36.8%	\$1,520,302	State Sources	\$1,921,585	39.6%
4.4%	\$181,384	Federal Sources	\$295,534	6.1%
0.11%	\$4,461	Non Revenue	\$3,167	0.07%
Total	\$4,132,826	Total Receipts	\$4,848,407	Total

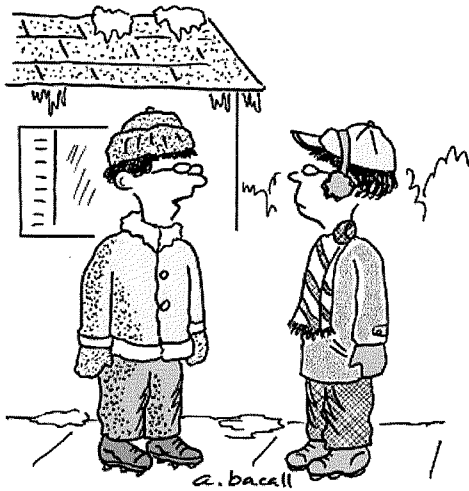
Per pupil expenditures (PPE) can be affected by a number of factors including fluctuations in enrollment and General Fund expenditures, number of building sites and depreciation on the building and equipment, and transfers to the Depreciation Fund. Palmer's overall PPE consistently remains near the statewide average and below that for schools of comparable size. Per Pupil Expenditure varies only slightly from "General Fund Operating Expenditures per Formula Student," a critical component in the State Aid funding formula. The GFOE for the next 10 larger and next 11 smaller schools in the state for 2022-23 are portrayed at right. Unique circumstances (poverty, transportation needs, Special Education...) can have a dramatic effect on a district's budget and should be considered when comparing such data.

District	Formula Students	Adjusted GFOE per Formula Student
Central Valley	280.8	\$23,583
East Butler	282.6	\$22,974
Hitchcock Co	284.7	\$13,614
Loup City	285.0	\$15,725
Sutherland	287.9	\$16,366
Fullerton	292.1	\$16,015
Blue Hill	293.0	\$16,704
Humphrey	293.7	\$13,894
Pleasanton	296.7	\$11,105
Axtell	299.7	\$15,426
Morrill	300.9	\$18,500
Palmer	302.7	\$13,227
Arapahoe	305.2	\$13,061
Boyd Co	309.0	\$14,990
Bayard	309.4	\$17,148
Neligh-Oackdale	321.6	\$16,211
Plainview	322.3	\$15,431
Heartland Comm	323.8	\$14,062
Elm Creek	328.5	\$13,307
Johnson-Brock	334.9	\$11,856
Cross County	339.6	\$17,281
Alma	351.4	\$14,655

The total assets for the funds used by Palmer Public Schools for the past three years are portrayed below. Palmer Public Schools attempted to build reserves in anticipation of continued funding cuts from other sources. That effort has mitigated increases in the tax asking to operate the district.

Fiscal Year	Governmental Funds	Fiduciary Funds	All Funds
2020-2021	\$2,724,600	\$111,734	\$2,836,334
2021-2022	\$3,207,355	\$82,396	\$3,289,751
2022-2023	\$3,523,240	\$80,540	\$3,603,780

Governmental Funds=Total Assets of The General Fund, Depreciation Fund, Employee Benefit Fund, Bond Fund, Special Building Fund and The Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund, School Nutrition Fund, Cooperative Fund
Fiduciary Funds=Activities Fund



"My mom is an English teacher and she says Santa's elves are subordinate clauses."

As we finish Thanksgiving and head towards Christmas, it's definitely a thankful season. I am so thankful for the excellent faculty we have at PHS!! They are not only excellent teachers but strive to have fun at their jobs as well. That makes for a very fun environment. At the same time, we couldn't enjoy our amazing culture without the students. I've been in different school systems and we clearly have the best group of kids.

Now they're still teenagers and will occasionally do "teenager things" but we have some very special kids and they don't always get the credit they deserve!!

The Winter Sports Season is upon us and the number of athletes participating are trending upward. We have approximately 10 more students participating this school year. Plus, with the bigger classes of students moving through the system, we look for more participation going forward. The first basketball games commence on November 30th and the first wrestling matches will start December 2nd. Come on out and see our athletes in action!!

The K-12 Christmas Concert will be on December 19th and Christmas Vacation will start at 1:30 pm on December 21st. Happy Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas to all!!!

Greg Morris
Secondary Principal/Activities Director



Dear Palmer Families,

As we approach the end of the calendar year, I am excited to share some important updates and highlights from our school community. It has been a fantastic first half of the school year, and I am proud of the hard work and dedication shown by our students, teachers, and parents.

Our mid-year assessments and benchmarking sessions are right around the corner. These assessments are valuable tools that help us gauge the progress our students have made so far and identify areas for growth. We appreciate your continued support in ensuring that your child is well-prepared (rested and had breakfast either at home or at school) and ready for these evaluations. If you have any questions or concerns about the assessment process, please don't hesitate to reach out to your child's teacher or me.

We are excited to showcase the talents of our students in our upcoming K-12 Christmas music program. Mrs. Sake and the students have been working diligently to prepare an entertaining and memorable performance. The program will not only showcase the musical abilities of our students but also foster a sense of teamwork and collaboration. Please mark your calendars for December 19th, and join us in celebrating the artistic accomplishments of our talented students.

As the temperature drops and winter weather approaches, please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather conditions. Layers, hats, gloves, and warm coats are essential to keep our students comfortable and healthy during the colder months. Additionally, labeling your child's belongings helps us reunite lost items with their owners more efficiently. We tend to collect A LOT of extra items as the Nebraska weather fluctuates numerous times, sometimes in the same day!

As we wrap up the year, I want to express my gratitude for your continued support and partnership. Your involvement in your child's education is invaluable, and we look forward to working together in the coming months to create a positive and enriching learning environment for all our students.

Wishing you and your family a joyous holiday season and a Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

Sherise Loeffelbein

Pk-6 Principal/District Special Education Director

Counselor's Corner



Hello all

Hectic schedules can drain your energy and keep you so busy that you often forget to take care of yourself both physically and emotionally. Take a moment to stop and think about what you need to do enable you to perform at your very best. Regular self-care can improve your well-being and self-esteem. It also increases resiliency that you need to help bounce back when problems come up in your life. So what does self-care look like? What can you do?

- 1) **Tell yourself that you do matter;** and because you matter it is important to spend time and energy on helping yourself feel better. Self-care is finding a way to build yourself up.
- 2) **Be extra nice to yourself.** Do things that you enjoy and that help you to relax and unwind.
- 3) **Be patient with yourself.** Accept that you will make mistakes, know that you can't please everyone, and allow time to grieve. Know that things will get better, even if it takes a while.
- 4) **Invest in yourself.** Follow your dreams. Study things that interest you.
- 5) **Recognize when you are in over your head.** This could include working with a therapist, talking to a trusted adult, or going to a support group.
- 6) **Say no to situations or people that you know could trigger you in a negative way.** Self-care means that you protect yourself so you can build a stronger future self.
- 7) **Focus forward.** Self-care means moving ahead, not looking back. Making goals for tomorrow or next week are your first step toward the future.
- 8) **Be proud of yourself.** Declare victory when things go well. Recognize when you make good choices, or when you succeed at something that you have been working toward.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at cvalasek@palmer.esu7.org or call 894-3065.

Mrs. Valasek

DECEMBER

HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELING OFFICE



FAFSA

Mrs. Trout 7-12 School Counselor

Opening Date: The official FAFSA opening date is TBD, but it will be on or before December 31st

Business & Farm: If your family owns a business or farm, you will have to report its net worth on the FAFSA.

FAFSA Calculation: The FAFSA calculation will no longer consider how many siblings you have attending college.

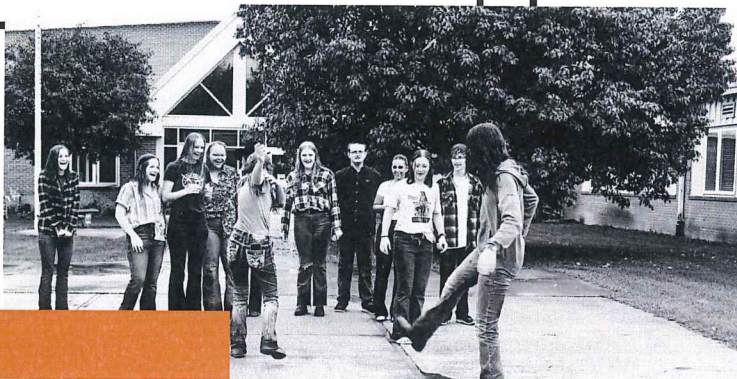


Scholarships

Scholarship information is being shared to seniors school email as the information comes into me. Seniors can also find more scholarship opportunities at <http://bit.ly/PHS-Scholarships>

Senior Parents To-Do List:

Until the FAFSA opens up you can go ahead and get a FSA ID (Federal Student Aid ID). One parent AND the student will need to get an FSA ID. To get an FSA ID go to studentaid.gov, this will take 3 days to be verified. This will need to be done no later than 3 days before completing the FAFSA. If you need help creating an FSA ID please email Mrs. Trout at atROUT@palmer.esu7.org to setup a time to do this. If you have any questions please feel free to reach out!



Upcoming Events

December 7th: Seniors will be visiting UNL
December/January: FAFSA Night - We will host this once the FAFSA opens up (Date TBD)

Mrs. Green's World

Hello, Everyone. I am here for year eleven at Palmer Public Schools. This year has been extra crazy. It feels like every minute of every day is busy putting on one hat and then another, then another again. From teaching 7th Language Arts, to coming up with an option of real world English, One-Act, PYSA, planning trips, and running kids around...the exhaustion is real! 😊

We are in year two of our new curriculum, and we are working out the kinks from the first year. Mrs. G, Mrs. Samuelson and I spent many hours deliberating on a new curriculum to challenge and enhance our students' knowledge of English. It is completely different from what we were doing in the past, but in year two we can see the leaps in critical thinking, research, and analysis that are challenging for kids to do, and are pushing the kids in directions that demand critical thinking.. We are excited to keep evolving and implementing it in a successful way.

Palmer Public School has 26 members participating in One-Act: performing "Family Vacation" Written By: Brooklyn Fredricksen. I was made aware of this play from Amanda Etherton, and the playwright was so excited to have her first school perform it, she came and watched one of our competitions. That is a very cool experience that very few performers get to have. . The cast has done a dress rehearsal for the K-12 student body, performed for the community at the Endowment , performed at two critique days at Holdredge and Central City, and went to a workshop that proved course changing last year. The cast has Conference Central City Performing Arts Center on November 22nd and Districts on November 28th in Humphrey. The last two years have been so rewarding and I would not be this successful without Leah Brown helping, volunteering, feeding, and researching. She is indispensable. I do not know what I will do if and when she leaves me.

Yearbook made a big switch to TreeRing this year, moving away from the conventional Jostens approach. It is a learning curve for sure. The great thing about it is that we can add or subtract pages as we need, we can have parents add special sections for only their child, and we only have to pay for the number sold. This we hope will be a GAMECHANGER!

Kyler is in 6th grade, and I cannot quite wrap my head around the fact he will be in 7th grade (my side of the building) next year. And I will be his teacher. He is loving all things sports but still is driven by school, learning, and dreaming of ways he can change the world. Kyn is in 5th grade, but thinks she is in 7th. She has had an amazing year singing the National Anthem for minor league baseball teams, events around the state fair and on the broadcast, football games, and was even asked to sing at the stock show. Kyndrek is my 2nd grade energizer bunny. He never wants to sit still, and would carry his Nebraska football around everywhere to stay "in the game" at all times. He is obsessed with the NFL and watches plays, stats, and games whenever we let him. They all three keep me busy, entertained, and full of love.

And as always, I am grateful to teach these kids and be a part of this amazing community!

Jaime Green

Co-Teacher MSLA II and MSLA III

Speech

Intro to Lit / Real Word Lit

Play Production

Prom Sponsor

English 10 and 12

Creative Writing

Journalism

Competitive Speech

Busy Mom 😊



THANKFUL

The Kindergarten, First, and Second Grade classes recently gathered together for their annual Friendship Feast. The students feasted on jerky, summer sausage, cheese, crackers, grapes, apples, and more! We greatly appreciate the donations from the families of our students.



ELEMENTARY RESOURCE

MRS. MELISSA KRIZ

Happy Holidays! It is hard to believe we are already getting ready for the new year. Time flies when you're having fun, right?!

We really hit the ground running once again this year with the beginning of the year assessments. I am excited to take the Mid-Year assessments in December to see all the growth the student will show. They have been working so hard all semester!

Our Mclass reading groups are working hard on various skills to help reinforce their classroom work in reading and writing. It continues to show us a new way of learning that is really helping expand our way of reading and writing. We currently use the DIBELS progress monitoring and AIMS progress monitoring programs to help monitor our students' growth weekly or bi-weekly.

We also continue to work on reinforcing our math brains and work on reviewing all the different strategies to solve various types of math problems. Fact fluency is a key area that we are focusing on this year in our small groups.

Wishing you all a Wonderful New year!

-Mrs. Melissa Kriz

PALMER PHYSICAL EDUCATION 2023-24

MR. SAKE

The first half of the school year has been a success for the PE department at PPS. Elementary students have been working hard daily to increase their cardiovascular fitness through a variety of games. One exciting activity we have implemented with upper elementary is simulating real games with students as refs, score keepers, and book keepers. Students got a new perspective on what all goes into hosting a game and the pressures of those support personnel who help make the game run. I have also tried to implement some fresh new games that have went over very well.

On the field JH and HS football came and went rather quickly. I want to thank all the parents and players for the participation and support. With just a few days in between seasons JH and HS basketball are now well underway. I am happy with our girls dedication to the sport and think we have a bright future in women's basketball. I would like to remind folks that you can watch all of our home games junior high through varsity online. We love the support we get from the community and love hearing that friends and family are watching from afar.



SPANISH NEWS

¡Saludos! (Greetings!) A fast and furious first semester has seen our students pick up some great experiences. During Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15 - October 15, they learned that other countries celebrate their own independence days, and they don't fall on July 4. At the end of October, we compared how Halloween and Día de los Muertos differ. From the start of the school year until the beginning of November, we prepared to travel to the Edgar René concert. We watched music videos, learned to dance salsa, sang, and interpreted lyrics. On October 31, I was able to join with my students from Anselmo-Merna and Sandhills Public Schools to see Edgar in concert; six of our students were able to join Edgar up on stage to dance and participate in other activities. Then, on November 3, our Palmer and Elba students attended Edgar's concert in Central City. Five of our students managed to be invited to the stage a performed well. Edgar René is a Puerto Rican singer who does concerts all over the world, and brings to student messages of resilience and perseverance.



Also, this year we are introducing a food of the week in our classes. Students have the opportunity to bring that food as a main course or as an ingredient in another food. It's a great way to learn some new vocabulary, and to discuss something that really matters to students... food!

“¿Qué tal?” and “AHORA” magazines are, also, a new introduction this year. The material features articles on a variety of topics of interest to students that are written to their Spanish reading level. They cover sports, technology, transportation, nature, ecology, music, and more!

Currently, we are gearing up for the holiday season. Christmas carols are a great way to work on Spanish pronunciation and fluency, and we may even take our show on the road this year (or at least down the halls of the school :-)

Looking ahead, second semester will bring the opportunities to learn about gift-giving, our field trip to 4th Street in Grand Island, a virtual tour to a Spanish-speaking country with a Reach the World traveler, and create competitive materials for the UNL Language Fair.

So, “¡Fiestas Felices a Todos!” (Happy Holidays to Everyone). May the holidays bring you all you hope for and more!

5th Grade

Brandon Rolf

We are almost halfway done with another school year! We have twenty-one students in our classroom this year, sixteen girls to only five boys.

We are in year two of our new reading curriculum called Common Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA). It is a rigorous program that keeps the students engaged and writing a lot. Over the summer I spent a lot of time going over each of the nine units to see how many standards each unit covered. I will teach the units in the order that covers the most standards. There is not much spelling in the new curriculum.

Also new this year is how my grading system works. Last summer I attended a seminar about grading. They emphasized not putting much, if any, value on homework because situations at home are not always on an equal playing field. So instead of sending homework home, we try to accomplish all of our classwork during the school day. Finally, when the unit is complete, we will have a test. I sometimes allow a fix day to correct any errors that they may have made. This way I can truly understand if they know or do not know the topic/standard. Plus I feel most people learn from mistakes just as much if not more than anything else.

In math we have battled through some multiplication, long division and exponents. We just got finished adding, subtracting, and multiplying fractions. I have pulled a lot of resources to try and help with memorization of math facts. So future students who are coming into fifth grade, (Know your math facts please!).

In social studies our explorers are just starting to make their way to America to start colonizing. We had the opportunity to attend the Stuhr Museum in September and completed Pioneer Living and Cabin Life.

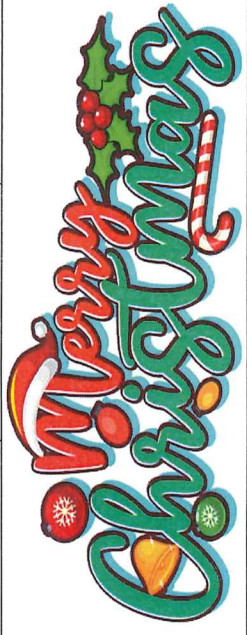
Our biggest accomplishments are trying to get real world ready, taking pride in our work, working to learn and not working to get done, trying our best at all times, learning from our mistakes and treating others how we want to be treated.

It will be fun to watch these youngsters continue to grow together into junior high, high school and beyond! Thank You all for allowing me to teach your wonderful children. #Rolltigs!

- Brandon Rolf

December Lunch Menu

2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
					B: Cheese Omelet L: Chicken Noodle Soup, Muffin, Strawberry Cup, Carrots	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	B: Pancakes L: Hamburger, Pineapple, Smiley Fries	B: Biscuits & Gravy 4 th Grade Meal L: Pizza, Strawberry Cup, Corn, Ice Cream	B: Fruit Turnover L: Macaroni w/ Cheese and Ham, Pink Applesauce, Peas	B: Cinni Minis L: Chicken Tenders, Peaches, Scalloped Potatoes, Dinner Roll	B: Cereal L: Hamburger Soup, PB & J Sandwich, Grapes, Carrots	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	B: Soft Pretzel L: Pulled Pork, Sandwich, Pink Applesauce, Potato Triangles	B: Cereal L: Beef & Noodles over Mashed, Pears, Dinner Roll	B: French Toast L: Burrito, Rice, Pineapple, Corn	B: Scrambled Eggs L: Mini Corn Dog, Mandarin Oranges, Baked Beans, Chips	B: Breakfast Pizza L: Chili Soup, Cinnamon, Strawberry Cup, Carrots	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	B: Pancakes L: BBQ Rib Sandwich, Pineapple, Fries	B: Cereal L: Walking Taco, Strawberry Cup, Corn, Brownie	B: Cheese Omelet L: Fiestada, Glazed Bananas, Green Beans, Ice Cream	B: Breakfast Sandwich L: Chicken Sandwich, Pink Applesauce, Baked Beans <i>Early Out</i>	Merry Christmas!	
24	25					
	Merry Christmas!					

January Lunch Menu

2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				4	5	6
				B: Donut L: Pizza, Pink Applesauce, Green Beans, Fruit Snacks	B: Breakfast Pizza L: Sandwich Bar, Grapes, Carrots, Chips/Cookie	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	B: Pancakes L: Crisпитos, Rice, Pink Applesauce, Corn	B: Cheese Omelet L: Pork Patty on a Bun, Peaches, Baked Beans, Chips	B: Fr Turnover L: Salisbury Steak, Peas, Mashed Potatoes, Dinner Roll	B: Biscuits & Gravy L: Chicken Tenders, Pineapple, Green Beans, Cookie	B: Breakfast Sandwich L: Chili, Cinnamon Roll, Strawberry Cup, Celery	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	B: Soft Pretzel L: Hamburger Peaches, Smiley Fries, Fruit Snacks	B: Cereal 3 rd Grade Meal L: Super Nachos, Glazed Bananas, Corn, Italian Ice	B: French Toast L: Cream Chicken on a Biscuit, Pink Applesauce, Peas	B: Scrambled Eggs L: Hot Ham & Cheese Croissant, Strawberry Cup, Scalloped Potatoes	B: Breakfast Pizza L: Chicken Noodle Soup, Muffin, Grapes, Carrots	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	B: Donut L: Meatball Sub, Mandarin Oranges, Potato Triangle	B: Pancakes L: Meal in a Bowl, Pink Applesauce, Dinner Roll	B: Breakfast Burrito L: Mini Corndogs, Peaches, Baked Beans Early Out	B: Cinni Minis L: Chicken Sandwich, Peas, Green Beans, Cookie	B: Cereal L: Hamburger Soup, PB & J Sandwich, Strawberry Cup, Celery	
28	29	30	31	HAPPY NEW YEAR 2024!		
	B: Soft Pretzel L: Macaroni & Cheese with Ham, Pink Applesauce, Peas, Bug Bits	B: Cereal L: Pig in a Blanket, Strawberry Cup, Baked Beans, Ice Cream	B: French Toast L: Fiestada, Pineapple, Corn, Fruit Snacks			