



Palmer Public School



Dr. Joel Bohlken, Superintendent
Sherise Loeffelbein, PK-6 Principal
Kristin Reimers, 7-12 Principal

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Superintendent's Newsletter, February/March 2025

Annual Palmer Shake Competition: Preparing Students for Success

The Annual Palmer Shake Competition at PPS is more than just an activity; it's an opportunity for students to develop essential professional and social skills. This longstanding tradition focuses on teaching manners, poise, and communication, equipping participants with tools to excel in the real world.

Students face a series of challenges designed to mimic real-life scenarios, including mock interviews, customer service tasks, conflict resolution, and public speaking. They are assessed on their body language, adaptability, conversation skills, and overall charisma. These dynamic exercises emphasize key interpersonal skills, from etiquette and handshakes to networking and problem-solving under pressure.

By stepping out of their comfort zones, participants build resilience, emotional intelligence, and critical thinking—traits proven to enhance academic performance and long-term success. Research supports that students with strong social-emotional skills excel not only in school but also in future career settings, making programs like this invaluable.

To make this event a success, we need your help! Community members are invited to join as judges, offering valuable feedback and guidance to students. Volunteering provides a unique and rewarding experience, as past judges have shared how enjoyable and enlightening it is. If you're available during the school day and would like to get involved, please contact the school to join our judges list. Exact dates will be announced soon.

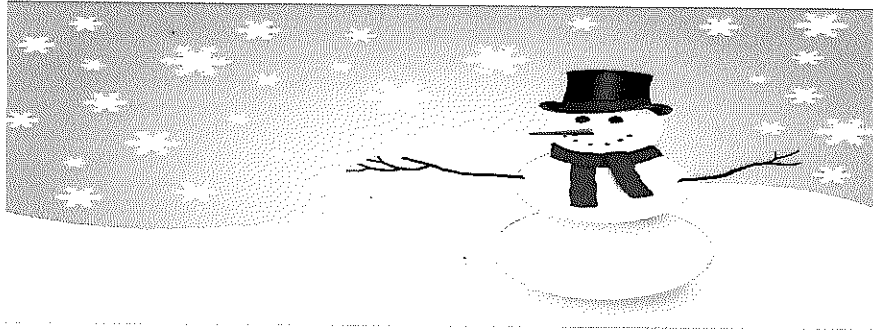
Thank you for supporting our students as they develop the leadership and interpersonal skills that will shape their futures.

Sincerely,



Dr. Bohlken

A Community that prides itself on Commitment, Growth, & Achievement!



Dear Parents and Guardians,

As we move into February and March, I hope this finds you well! These months are crucial as we prepare for district and state assessments. Here are some key updates:

Preparing for Assessments

Teachers are working hard to ensure students are ready for assessments. You can help by:

- Providing a quiet study space.
- Encouraging attendance and punctuality.
- Promoting healthy habits like proper sleep and nutrition.

Parent-Teacher Conferences: February 5

Conferences will be held **Monday, February 5**. There will be **no school for PreK-6 students**. If you haven't scheduled your meeting, please contact your child's teacher.

Important Dates

- **February 5:** No school for PreK-6 (Parent-Teacher Conferences)
- **February 12, 20, 26:** Early Dismissals
- **February 14:** Valentine's Day celebrations
- **February 21:** No school
- **March 7:** Early Dismissal and End of Quarter 3
- **March 10:** No school

Staying Connected

Please reach out with any questions and check our website or social media for updates. With Nebraska weather being unpredictable, keep an eye out for weather to possibly change schedules and have a plan in place if we are to have a late start, no school or early dismissal. Thank you for your continued support in making these months successful for all!

Sincerely,

Sherise Loeffelbein

PK-6 Principal/Special Education Director



Think Spring!

Our winter has been mild (so far) and spring is just out of reach. People can experience a period where they lack motivation and energy this time of year. Certain characteristics are tell-tale signs that dispiritedness is influencing a person's ambition. For example, individuals can feel lethargic, or disinterested in their work. They can have difficulty concentrating, increased restlessness, and elevated fatigue. Teachers work hard to combat the malaise in their classrooms, yet often face students asking why they must be in school. High school is not just a state-mandated demand, it serves as a platform for our students' future. Academic growth and attaining knowledge are integral to the process; however, there is so much more to attending high school than this. Social and emotional development allows students to learn teamwork, time management, decision-making, cultural



awareness, responsibility, and many more skills that equip students with the tools they need to succeed. Students can defeat the doldrums by seizing opportunities to shape their futures and enhance their well-being. For instance, a student can explore new interests, join clubs or teams they have not belonged to before, discover various career pathways by taking a class they might not have, make connections with other students and staff, and flex grit by staying involved even if they do not enjoy every moment of the activity. Understanding that each pursuit, class, and relationship lays the foundation for the person they are becoming. We can encourage our students to show up and contribute, embrace opportunities, and face challenges to create limitless possibilities for their present and future selves! *Mrs. Kristin Reimers*



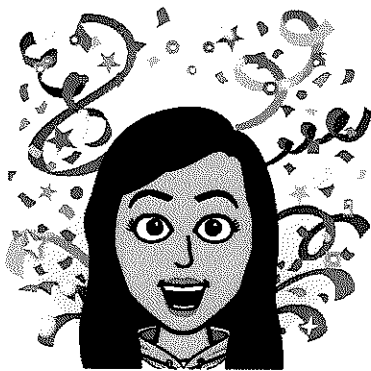
Congratulations to our Junior High Girls' Basketball team for going **UNDEFEATED** this year! This accomplishment isn't just about the wins; it's about the dedication, discipline, and heart you put into every game and practice.



Be proud of what you've achieved—you've earned it!

Counselor's Corner

National School Counseling Week Feb. 3 - 7



In celebration of National School Counseling Week, let's walk through what the occupation is all about and how it has evolved over the last 100 years. School counseling is now designed to facilitate student achievement, improve student behavior and attendance, and help students develop socially. School counselors support students who are experiencing personal or academic challenges, help students choose careers and plan for college, and intervene when students face behavioral, physical, or mental health challenges.

HISTORY OF SCHOOL COUNSELING

In the early 20th century, as industrial centers grew throughout the United States, secondary schools began to increase their focus on courses that would help prepare students to enter the workforce. This movement gave way to school counseling (then called guidance counseling).

- 1917: Specific legislation is drafted to provide funding for vocational guidance programs.
- 1920s: New York becomes the first to develop certification requirements for school counselors.
- 1930s: Urban elementary schools begin to offer school counseling services.
- 1950s: The humanistic psychology and person-centered psychology movements gaining traction lead the focus of school counseling to undergo a significant shift.
- 1970s: School counseling incorporates wider goals of helping students develop socially, personally, and academically.
- 1990s: A nationwide shift toward standards-based education and the adoption of legislation such as the No Child Left Behind Act make it necessary for school counselors to find increasingly innovative ways to serve students.
- 2010s: American School Counseling Association (ASCA) reissues Code of Ethics to ensure all students receive access to K-12 counseling programs.

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.

Carissa Valasek

FEBRUARY

HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELING OFFICE



SENIOR

Mrs. Trout 7-12 School Counselor

NEWS

Scholarships

February 1st Deadlines

- Susan Buffett
- Merrick County Foundation

Seniors can access scholarship applications through a Google Sheet I have shared with them called Class of '25 Scholarships. I also email them with any other scholarships that I receive that are not on that list.

Letters of Recommendation:
Don't forget to give your counselor and teachers at least 2 weeks notice when requesting letters of recommendation.



Community Service Hours

Don't forget that every school year 9th - 12th grade students need to have 10 hours of community service hours completed.

Upcoming Events

February

5th - High school parent teacher conferences start at 2:30 - 8 pm & 1:30 pm dismissal

April

30th - 7th Grade Transition Day (for 6th graders) during school hours.

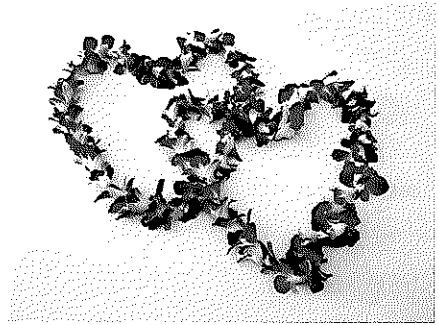
May

1st - 7th Grade Transition Night for 6th grade parents time is TBD.

Happy New Year from the second grade crew here at PHS! We have had quite the year as we are a school family of 22! With that being said, we have had a lot of obstacles and challenges, but way more successes and praises that make it worth it!

I am beyond proud of each and every one of these kiddos as they each have improved on their Winter MAPS Reading test, with over half already meeting their SPRING projected score! As a teacher you couldn't ask for anything more with how hard they continue to work.

I also had the opportunity last month to take our 2nd grade crew on a wild ride as they were **AUTHORS & ILLUSTRATORS** for our own classroom book! We took a heart and they had to create their own short story about what it turned into, by giving details and then drawing it! I then sent it off to the National Student Publishers organization, where they took all of our rough draft pages and binded it together for parents to buy if they wanted! They used a variety of ideas and this project reflected upon their creative ability!



I hope you all have a great 2025!

Mrs. Hinrichs

THIRD GRADE NEWS

august/september

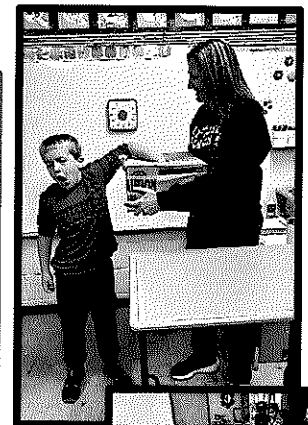
Our class was so excited return to school! We spent the first week sharing fun things about our summer and learning new routines. Some of the topics our class was most excited about learning in third grade were: multiplication and division, cursive, and new art projects. Mrs. Santin and Mrs. Norman were very excited to get to work together this year!

Some September highlights included mastering multiplication facts, reading folktales in ELA, and working on some awesome art projects like our cursive names. We LOVED Spirit Week and our class worked very hard on their cheer for the homecoming pep rally.

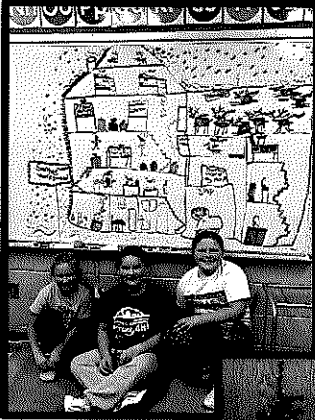


october/november

October went so fast for the 3rd Grade class – we had lots to look forward to!! Our new reading unit was an informative unit all about animals and their characteristics (definitely made this class full of animal lovers happy!) We also had a great time with Fall Caroling and our Halloween Party! The students participated in "Fear Factor" and had to touch some pretty gross things like eyeballs and brains! So gross! In November, we enjoyed performing at the Veteran's Day program. We were also reminded throughout the month of all of things we have to be thankful for. Our read alouds during the months of October and November included many of the "I Survived" series books – definitely a class favorite!



THIRD GRADE NEWS



december

December went very quick for us! Some of our December highlights included creating calendars to give to our families, making ornaments, and performing at our Christmas Program. We began our work with division facts, had a visit from Santa, and had lots of fun at our Christmas and AR parties. A favorite activity for many of the students was a 'mad lib' Christmas story that they were able to write and then read aloud.

january

We returned in January with a 'Countdown to 2025' – our countdown included random acts of kindness, math review, a 'top ten' for returning to school and more! We set goals for ourselves at home and at school by decorating New Years balloons. We also celebrated our 100th Day of school later on in the month. We did many math and ELA activities focused around the number 100.

Things to look forward to...

- Animal Research Project
- Superbowl Day
- Valentine's Day Party
- Roman Empire Market
- Stuhr Museum Field Trip
- Lincoln Field Trip

Greetings from the Palmer Music Department!

It has been a great year! Our students are doing outstanding things! First of all, the elementary students have been getting out of their comfort zones with their patriotic performances of the Star Spangled Banner now at junior high athletic events! The 5th and 6th grade band students are on a whole other level this year! They are SO much further ahead than any of the past beginners I've started, thanks to BAND KARATE. Last year I experimented with a student self motivated practice technique instead of required practice minutes. The students have had outstanding success! If you don't follow the Palmer K-12 Music Facebook page, please make sure to check it out! In the secondary music world, the success continues! The high school band outdid themselves at Harvest of Harmony with 1st out of 40 Class D bands, as well as BEST OVERALL in Class C/D division! To take it a step further, our small Class D band ended up ranking 2nd out of 82 (ALL CLASS) bands! Only getting second to AA Class Band-Kearney High School! Wow! Talk about my cup being overflowed :) The junior high band had equal success at the Minden Bandfest, where they received a SUPERIOR rating in the junior high division.

As for this second semester, we had 9 students (with 2 alternates) accepted into the Wayne State Honor Band on January 25th! Those students were: Makenna Mottl, Aubri Holthaus, Hailey Weller, Camila Renteria-Guzman, Evan Simonson, Noah Mueller, Eryn Gregoski, Nevaeh Schleicher, and Marlea Donahey. The 2 alternates were Gemini Mickley and Rebekah Steiner. Recently, 12 of our high school students tried out for the Class D All State Band. We will receive notification in February of how their auditions went and if they are selected! Stay tuned! In March, the 5th and 6th grade will have the opportunity to perform at the annual Wayne State Middle School Festival. Right now, 29 of these young people have signed up and selected a piece to perform. The 7th and 8th grade will also be attending this event, where equally 29 of them have signed up to perform! The future is so bright!

Upcoming dates to keep in mind:

- *WSC Middle School Festival-March 11th (7th and 8th Grade)
- *WSC Middle School Festival-March 12th (5th and 6th Grade)
- *GRC Music Contest-March 26th
- *Class D All-State Band-March 29th
- *7-12 Spring Concert-April 22nd at 6:30 p.m.
- *District Music Contest-April 23rd
- *Nate Metschke Memorial 5th and 6th Grade Honor Band-April 26th
- *K-6 Spring Concert-May 5th at 6:30 p.m.
- *Branson High School Music Trip-May 18th-22nd
- *Memorial Day Services-May 26th at 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 11:00 a.m.

Thank you so much for your continued support of our Palmer Tiger Music Department! There truly is no better community than ours! We will continue to strive for excellence and bring pride to our school and community!

-Mrs. Sake

4TH GRADE

WHAT A BUSY YEAR IT HAS BEEN! WE HAVE COMPLETED MANY EXCITING LESSONS, ACTIVITIES, AND THERE IS MANY MORE TO COME! WE ARE ON YEAR 3 WITH USING THE CKLA READING CURRICULUM. THERE ARE SO MANY FUN THEMES, READING STRATEGIES, AND CHALLENGES. WE HAVE 8 UNITS, EACH UNIT HAS A THEME:

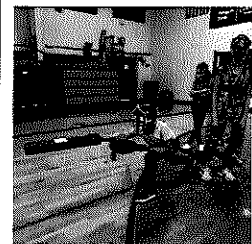
- UNIT 1: PERSONAL NARRATIVES**
- UNIT 2: EMPIRES IN THE MIDDLE AGES**
- UNIT 3: POETRY**
- UNIT 4: EUREKA**
- UNIT 5: GEOLOGY**
- UNIT 6: CONTEMPORARY FICTION**
- UNIT 7: AMERICAN REVOLUTION**
- UNIT 8: TREASURE ISLAND**

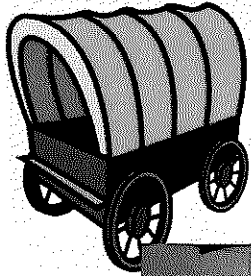
BEFORE CHRISTMAS BREAK WE HAD A MEDIEVAL FESTIVAL WITH A FEAST TO CELEBRATE THE END OF OUR UNIT ON THE MIDDLE AGES. WE JOUSTED, CREATED OUR OWN CRESTS, DECORATED CROWNS, CREATED MINI CATAPULTS, AND HAD A FEAST! OUR 4TH GRADE CLASS IS SO LUCKY TO HAVE SO MANY STAFF MEMBERS AND STUDENTS TO HELP MAKE OUR DAY SO SUCCESSFUL AND SPECIAL! I WAS AMAZED BY THE SURPRISES THEY HAD IN STORE FOR OUR CLASS! MRS. SAKE PLAYED HER TRUMPET FOR THE CLASS TO INTRODUCE OUR SPECIAL GUEST OF HONOR, QUEEN LOEFFELBEIN! TO TOP IT OFF, QUEEN LOEFFELBIEN CAME UP TO THE SCHOOL RIDING A HORSE PROVIDED BY HALEY WELLER! HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TAYLOR KURZ AND GATLIN REIMERS ALSO PLAYED THE ROLES OF KNIGHTS TO PRESENT THE FEAST TO THE CLASS! MR. SAKE LOANED US HIS CLASSROOM IN THE GYM FOR OUR JOUSTING DUALS TO TAKE PLACE IN.

THANK YOU FOR ALL THE FOOD DONATIONS FROM PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND TO MRS. HERRICK'S CULINARY CLASS FOR YOUR HELP BY PREPPING AND SERVING THE FOOD. THANK YOU MRS. REIMERS, MRS. SANTIN, AND MRS. NORMAN FOR HELPING WITH THE TIMING OF OUR EVENTS AND WITH SUPPLIES. ALSO THANK YOU MRS. LOCKWOOD FOR HELPING SERVE THE FOOD!

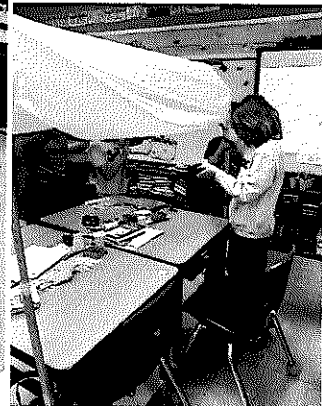
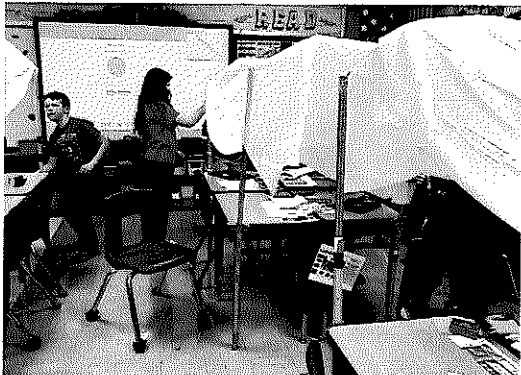
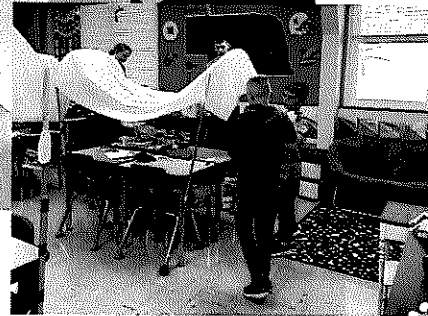
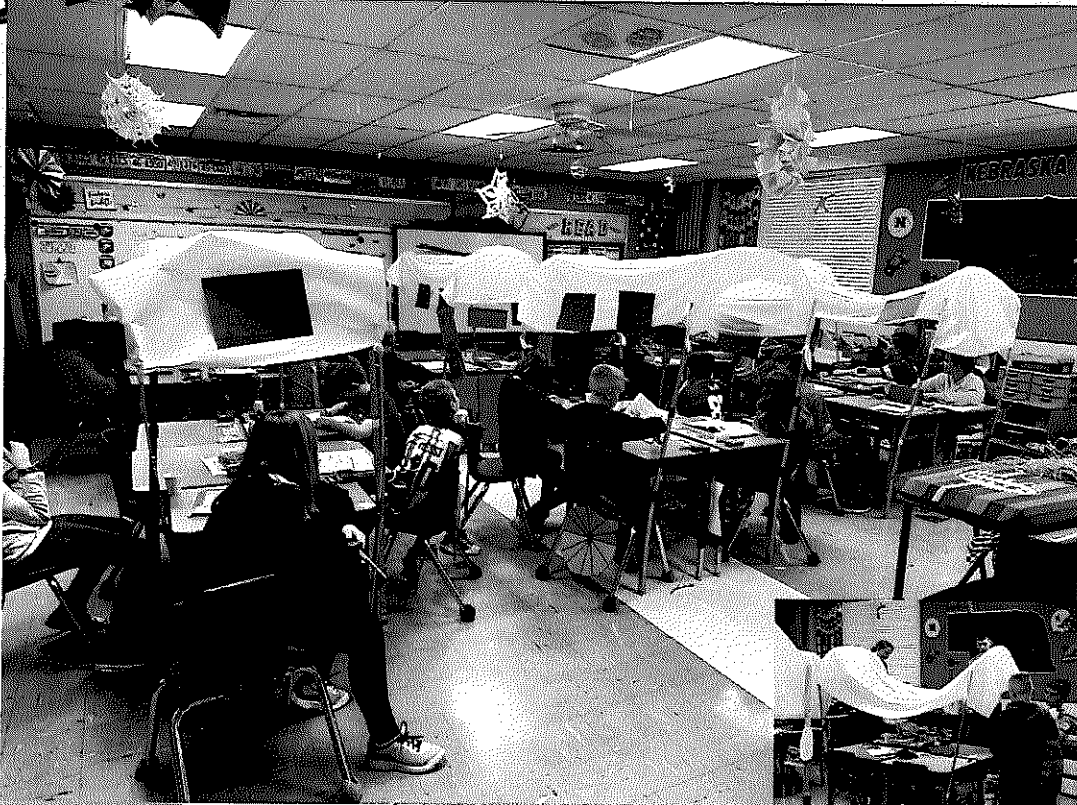
THANK YOU ONCE AGAIN, TO ALL FOR MAKING THIS MEDIEVAL FESTIVAL POSSIBLE! IT WAS A BLAST AND WE CREATED MANY GREAT MEMORIES. I AM SO LUCKY AND BLESSED TO WORK WITH SO MANY GREAT PEOPLE TO MAKE THIS EVENT "THE BEST DAY EVER" FOR MY STUDENTS!

MRS. THOMPSON





OUR NEXT EXCITING ADVENTURE IS LEARNING ABOUT THE OREGON TRAIL IN NEBRASKA HISTORY! WE HAVE CREATED COVERED WAGONS IN THE CLASSROOM AND CAME UP WITH FAMILY NAMES! WE ARE SO EXCITED TO BEGIN THIS JOURNEY DURING THESE NEXT FEW WEEKS!
-MRS. THOMPSON



Helping Your Student Look Beyond High School

In Nebraska, transition discussions begin for all students at fourteen years of age. Transition means " giving students time to explore their postsecondary goal choices." For most ninth-grade students, this starts with their entire class visiting college campuses and learning how to fill out a resume in Speech class. At fourteen transition discussions are difficult because most fourteen-year-olds have no idea what they want to do or be after high-school graduation. Starting the transition conversation early gets your student to think about and pay attention to what's in the world around them. At first, as a parent, you may get answers of "I don't know," or "I want to be a professional athlete." These answers are fine, at least your student is starting to think about post-secondary goals. Your child will also probably change their mind several times during high school, college, or even while in the workforce, but starting early gives them a direction to follow. Here are a few easy websites to visit for information about a variety of careers, find answers to common questions, and they provide information on how to determine what careers might fit your student the best.

Careers: <https://www.careeronestop.org/>

Job Interests: <https://www.onetonline.org/>

Natalie Bohlken

Secondary Special Education Teacher
Jr. High Math Intervention Teacher
Sophomore Class Sponsor



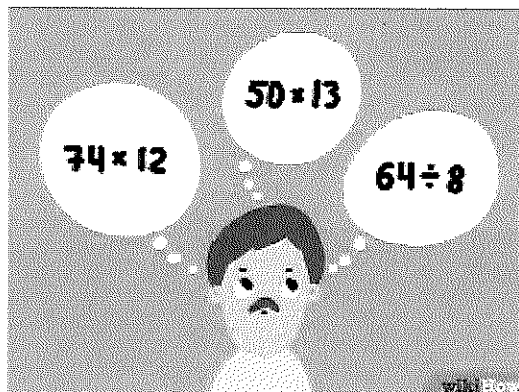
Math News from Room 103

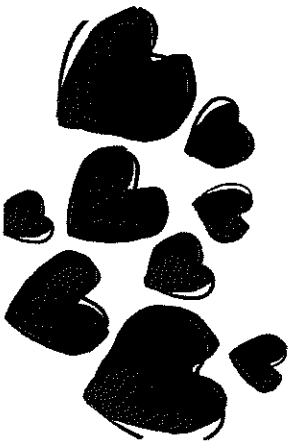
Math all day every day! The 7th graders are figuring out how fast things move on the other side of the building. Yes, they always have an assignment, but they wouldn't have as much homework if they figured out how to work harder and talk less. The Algebra 1 kids are learning the discovery side of our CPM curriculum. They work in groups and solve a big problem to discover ways to work the usual Algebra 1 math problems. We have been doing a lot of graphing and solving systems of equations. The Algebra 2 students are working on some very complex math problems. Someday they will appreciate how hard they had to work to master the concepts (I hope). The Advanced Math students successfully conquered Trig and have now moved on to PreCalc topics. The Applied Math kids are just mastering whatever I throw at them and figuring out concepts that build on what they already learned. This semester we have several students taking a variety of college Math courses. They will all be taking their first exams soon.

On the Quiz Bowl side of things we both the high school and junior high teams have competed in at least one event with several more over the next couple of months. Last year our high school team finally won the Goldenrod Conference Tournament!!! We went on to get 3rd at Districts, which is an all class event!! One place from an appearance at the State competition. It was so fun and truly a highlight of my coaching career to watch their success!! Our junior high team received some medals for their work at Spalding Academy in October and are getting ready to compete at our own event in February. Math Counts will be attending a regional event at UNK in early February.

With the warm Spring weather comes testing season. This is an opportunity for our students to showcase their acquired skills. Starting in February is the ELPA21 test, followed by NSCAS and the ACT in April, ending with MAP in May. Hard to fathom another year is flying by!! Feel free to stop by room 103 anytime you feel inclined to solve a math problem.

Cindy Doggett





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**Meals subject to change without notice.*

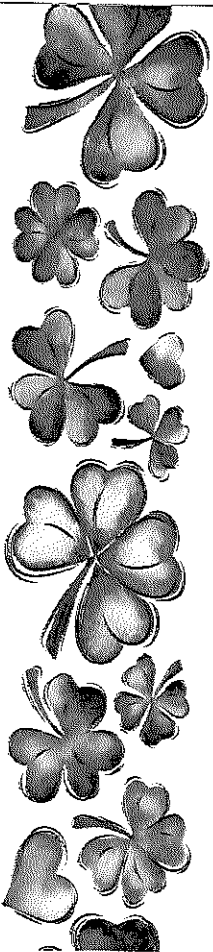
**All meals served with milk*



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3 B- Apple Fudgel L- Pork Patty on a bun Pears/Pink Applesauce Graham Snack	4 B- Donut L-Mini Corn Dogs Baked Beans/Peaches Rice Krispie Bar	5 B- NO BREAKFAST L-Fiestada Green Beans Mandarin Oranges	6 B- Cereal L-Burrito Spanish Rice/Corn Pineapple	7 B- Cheese Omelet L-Sandwich Bar Carrots/Grapes Chips/Cookie
10 B- Pancakes L- BBQ Rib Sandwich Green Beans/Mozzarella Sticks Mandarin Oranges	11 B- Muffin L- Walking Taco Corn/Pink Applesauce Brownie	12 B- Scrambled Eggs L- Macaroni & Cheese w/Ham Pears Peaches	13 B- Soft Pretzel L- Orange Chicken on Rice Broccoli/Pineapple Fortune Cookie	14 B- Breakfast Pizza L- Salisbury Steak Whipped Potatoes/Dinner Roll Pears
17 B- Donut L-Chili Cheese Dog Potato Triangles/Mandarin Oranges	18 B- French Toast L-Chicken Noodle Casserole Pears/Strawberry Cup	19 B- Cereal L- Meal In a Bowl Dinner Roll/Pink Applesauce	20 B- Sausage Torrado L- Pepperoni Calzone Green Beans/Pineapple	NO SCHOOL 21
24 B- Sausage Pancake on a Stick L-Pizza/Pears Strawberry Cup/Cookie	25 B- Biscuits & Gravy L-Chicken Sandwich/Peaches Green Beans/Refrigerator Dessert	26 B- Mini Bagels L- BBQ Pork Nachos Baked Beans/Pineapple	27 2nd grade Meal B- Cheese Omelet L- Chicken Alfredo/Corn Glazed Bananas/Italian Ice	28 B- Breakfast Pizza L-Hamburger

February 2025

March 2025

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
B- Scrambled Eggs 3 L- Pork Patty on a Bun Baked Beans/Pears Cheese-Its 10 NO SCHOOL	B- Cereal 4 L- Stromboli Corn/Strawberry Cup Ice Cream Cup B- Donut 11 L- Walking Taco Corn/Applesauce/Brownie	B- Muffin 5 L- Cheese Pizza Green Beans/Bug Bites Mandarin Oranges B- French Toast Tornado 12 L- Chicken Fried Steak Whipped Potatoes/Peaches Dinner Roll	B- Pancakes 6 L- Cream Chicken on a Biscuit Peas/Applesauce B- Breakfast Pizza 13 L- Mini Corndogs Green Beans/Apple Crisp Strawberry Cup	B- Cinnamon Minis 7 L- PB & J Sandwich Grapes/Carrots/Chips Cookie B- Cheese Omelet 14 L- Pizza Crunchers Baked Beans/Pineapple Rice Krispie Bar
B- Apple Frudel 17 L- Crisptos/Spanish Rice Corn/Pineapple	B- Soft Pretzel 18 L- Chicken Sandwich Peas/Glazed Bananas Bug Bites	B- Donut 19 L- Hot Ham & Cheese Croissant Scalloped Potatoes Pineapple	B- French Toast 20 L- Beef & Noodles on Mashed Potatoes Mandarin Oranges Dinner Roll	B- Cereal 21 L- Lasagne Rollups Green Beans/Peaches Fruit Snacks
B- Pancakes 24 L- Chill Cheese Dog Potato Triangles Strawberry Cup	B- Breakfast Pizza 25 L- Hamburger Baked Beans/Peaches	B- Cinn Filled Pretzel Stick 26 L- Sandwich Bar Carrots/Grapes Cookie/Chips	B- Early Riser 27 L- 1st Grade Meal Mac & Cheese w/Ham Corn/Pink Applesauce Italian Ice	B- Donut 28 L- Cheese Pizza Green Beans/Chex Mix Mandarin Oranges
B- Scrambled Eggs 31 L- BBQ Meatball Sub Waffle Files Pineapple				

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* Meals subject to change without notice

* All meals served with milk