



FAIRBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



APRIL 2008

SUPERINTENDENT - FRED HELMINK
JR./SR HIGH PRINCIPAL - JEFF VETTER
JEFFERSON INTERMEDIATE PRINCIPAL-
ANNETTE WEISE

ASST. PRINCIPAL/ACTIVITIES DIR -
KEVIN SIMMERMAN
CENTRAL ELMENTARY PRINCIPAL
JEREMY CHRISTIANSEN



Thoughts of a Superintendent

From the Desk of Fred Helmink

CALENDAR EVENTS

APRIL 4
NO SCHOOL FOR KDG
ONLY 9:00-11:30 KDG
ROUND UP

APRIL 12
PROM

APRIL 15
7-12 P/T CONFERENCES
5:00-9:00

APRIL 17
1:00 DISMISSAL IN-
SERVICE
DISTRICT MUSIC

APRIL 18
NO SCHOOL PREK-6
PLANNING DAY
1:00 DISMISSAL HIGH
SCHOOL
DISTRICT MUSIC

APRIL 21
NO SCHOOL SPRING
BREAK

The final quarter of school is upon us and soon students will be thinking about prom, graduation and summer. It seems like just yesterday we were beginning this school year. As superintendent, I am always amazed at how much students grow and mature each year and am delighted that our staff is such an integral part of that process. It is crucial that we do everything in our power to team with parents to ensure that the students in the Fairbury Schools receive the best education possible. Your input is valued and it is only through this partnership that we can truly be successful in educating our youth.

The quality of a school district can be measured in many ways – by an experienced teaching staff, modern facilities, or growth in revenues and it's per pupil spending. But the bottom line is that none of these factors really matters unless students are achieving. Parents and the community have the right to expect that when they send their children to school, learning will take place – learning that is commensurate with the skills needed to lead productive lives.

In this newsletter and in the next month, I will

be sharing with you highlights of our 2007-2008 Annual Report Card. Included will be demographic information about our District, results of both norm-referenced and standardized tests, financial data, new programs initiated, and accomplishments of students and staff. Part I of the information I would like to share deals with the demographics of our district.

Part I – Demographic Information: The Fairbury School District is a school system of approximately 950 students with a Pre-K through 2nd grade building; a 3-6th grade building; and a 7-12th grade building; all located in the city of Fairbury. Fairbury is a rural community that was founded in 1869 and has a population of 4,335. It is the county seat of Jefferson County and the district includes communities of Endicott, Gladstone, Jansen and Reynolds.

Although the enrollment of the Fairbury School District has declined for the past several years, there was a slight increase in numbers for 2007-2008. In addition, our school is in the third year of providing the Step Ahead Pre-school program and numbers of these students have been included in the chart below as they now count toward reimbursement we receive in the Nebraska state aid formula. The student population is composed of approximately 96 percent of white ethnicity while the remaining 4 percent is a mixture of Black, Hispanic, and Asian races and American Indian. The number of students qualifying for free and reduced meals is approximately 38 percent, which is 6 percent higher than the state average.

Enrollment	Total	Central	Jefferson	Jr/Sr High	Pre-School
2002-2003	935	216	226	493	
2003-2004	950	225	214	511	
2004-2005	952	213	191	519	29
2005-2006	925	179	241	474	31
2006-2007	907	170	245	447	45
2007-2008	922	199	232	441	50

Student Demographic Information:

% of Students	Free/Red Meals	SPED Serv.	Atten. Rate	Grad. Rate
2002-2003	36.9%	16.1%	95.9%	82.05%
2003-2004	39.3%	17.2%	95.5%	93.67%
2004-2005	40.6%	17.7%	95.7%	96.15%
2005-2006	39.3%	17.9%	95.9%	94.12%
2006-2007	38.3%	19.7%	95.2%	94.44%

The Fairbury School District has had a longstanding reputation of attracting and maintaining excellent teachers. The average number of years' experience of the 68 professional staff members employed is slightly more than eighteen years and of those years, nearly sixteen have been as employees of the Fairbury District. Fifty-seven percent of the teachers employed have Masters Degrees in the subject area they teach and this is nearly 20 percent higher than the state average. Staff members also attend numerous professional development workshops dealing with curriculum, standards, assessment, and technology and are well-prepared to help our students succeed. Below is a chart which includes experience and preparation level of the Fairbury staff.

Professional Staff	Av. Yrs Ex-perience	Yrs Exp in Fairbury	% with Masters	% with Hrs +Bachelors
2001-2002	16.94	15.41	48.5%	95%
2002-2003	18.00	15.52	56.5%	92%
2003-2004	17.93	15.40	58.6%	95%
2004-2005	18.51	15.77	57.4%	95%
2005-2006	17.87	15.01	52.2%	95%
2006-2007	16.80	14.20	53.6%	95%

SCHOOL-TO-CAREER CLASS FOR JUNIORS

By Taylor Biehl

Next year's juniors are going to have an outstanding opportunity to be the first to take the mandatory school-to-career class. Norris High School has been teaching this class for the last seven years and has found it to be highly successful and useful to students, especially when they become seniors. By the time they are seniors, filling out a resume', scholarship applications, job interviews, personality styles, and career choices will be much easier.

The class will have 4 rotations which will include:

- 1) Scholarship essay writing, scholarship research, activities resumes', etc.
- 2) Post-secondary research, scholarship information, portfolio, 2-year plan after high school, career searching, community service, job shadowing and a culminating career power point.
- 3) Interview skills, employment resume', letter of application, completing job applications, employability skills, and mock interviews.
- 4) Leadership skills, goal setting, personality profiles, etc.

Each rotation will last for 45 minutes for 9 weeks and will be taken first semester, so each student will have 2 of the 4 rotations term 1 and the other 2 term 2.

We spent an afternoon at Norris High School observing the class, talking to staff, and came away with positive feelings about what this class can potentially do for the students at Fairbury High School. If you have any questions, contact Taylor Biehl at 729-6116.

UPWARD BOUND

MARCH was a busy month for Upward Bound. Participants took a college tour of Union College and spent the afternoon doing some career searching. The participants discovered their personality through the Please Understand Me assessment, and also took the Self Directed Search assessment. This tool compiled information on the students' self-stated interests, abilities, and skills to generate future career ideas. Part of the March work shop was also spent learning valuable lessons on how to deliver a top notch job application and how to do a stellar job at a job interview.

March was also a big recruitment month for Upward Bound. If you missed one of the information meetings or our Open House at SCC, please contact Jill Rice (228-3468 ext 1405), Melissa Decker (228-3468 ext. 1406) or your school counselor for more information.

Participants: Dates to Remember for APRIL:

-Friday, April 4: If you signed up, we are going to "Carousel" at the Lied Center. We will leave at 6:00 pm.

There is still room to sign up! Contact Jill or Melissa if you want to go!

-Thursday, April 17: Senior Seminar 6:30-8:30 pm. We're talking about making that college transition!

-Friday, April 25: SAC fun night! I hear a Wii is involved...6-9 pm at the Kennedy Center of SCC. See you there!

SPORTS PASSES KEVIN SIMMERMAN

DON'T THROW YOUR PASSES AWAY. For those of you who purchased season passes for FHS activities for the 2007-2008 school year, please keep your passes. Our intention is to keep the passes for a three-year period since they were made out of plastic this year and are a little more durable than in the past. We will ask that you bring your passes to the Jr-Sr High School during the month of August to get them stamped for use during the 2008-2009 school year. There will be a \$5.00 extra charge if we have to issue new passes for the 2008-2009 school year. Keep your passes and save some money!!!!



WANTED! Fairbury Jr-Sr High School is looking for some help with the Central Conference Track and Field meet set for Saturday, May 3rd, 2008. If you have an interest in track and willing to help out for the day (12:00 PM to 7:00 PM) we would appreciate hearing from you. Please call Kevin Simmerman, Activities Director at the high school at 402-729-6116.

Fairbury Nearly Sweeps the Reading Classic County Competition

District Reading Classics Teams attended the county competitions at the Jefferson County Courthouse on March 17, 2008. Fairbury marked victories in both the Division 1 (3rd and 4th grade) and Division 2 (5th and 6th grade) team competitions against teams from Meridian and Tri County, but lost the Division 3 contest by a small margin to Tri County.



Reading classics 3 : Division 3 Team (Hannah Bauer, Trevor Bender, Qin Chen and Allison Burkley) Coach: Joyce Raatz

In the Reading Classic competition students are given a list of 70 or more award winning books which they must read and know well. During the competition,



Reading classics 2: Division 2 Team (Back row: Michaela Barber, Kara Riggle, Bryce Schouboe, front row: Jessa Schultis, Sierra Kroecker and Taylor Hill) Coaches: Cyndi Shinn and Deb Umland

students will be asked questions from any of the books on the list. Students able to answer the most questions as a team are the victors!! At the Division 2 and 3 levels, students are also subjected to current event questions they must answer.

Fairbury's Division 1 and 2 teams will now compete in the state competition held on April 5th in Hebron.



Reading classics : Division 1 team (Bladen Ahl, Trevin Likens, Kelsey Snyder, Erin Simmerman, Nick Christiansen, Ryan Umland) Coach: Annette Barber



REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE

by Barbara Bedlan, 2nd Grade Teacher, Central Elementary School

Children at Central Elementary and in the Step Ahead Early Childhood Program are very excited about April—Earth Day and Arbor Day in particular. Spring is such an invigorating time of year and our Earth is such a beautiful place. We strongly believe that we do need to educate ourselves and others and get involved in programs that help promote the care and preservation of our precious planet! What better place to start than with young children and their families!

Central Elementary School is serving as a recycling center during the month of April. There are 3 large boxes located at the school for the collection of newsprint, office/copy paper and slick paper (magazines and catalogs). Families and patrons are encouraged to bring paper for recycling to Central School during regular school hours (8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.).

Also, "Cat's Auto Supply" located at 324 3rd Street, has generously partnered with us and will donate all proceeds from aluminum can recycling during the month of April to Central School and the Step Ahead Early Childhood Program for the purchase of educational materials. Please take your aluminum cans for recycling!

There is also a full schedule of activities at Central Elementary planned for April. Classroom teachers will integrate our theme of "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" into several lessons throughout the month. On April 22nd in celebration of Earth Day, Marlene Faimon, Programs Manager at Little Blue NRD will present an Earth Day program to students by grade level. On Friday, April 25 (Nebraska's Arbor Day), each child will receive a tree sapling to take home for planting. Also on this day, students will participate in the planting of a tree on our school grounds. This activity is sponsored by the NRCS office in Fairbury.

Happy Earth Day and Arbor Day to everyone!



**In Honor of
Earth Day 2008...**



Central Elementary
&
Step Ahead Early
Childhood Program

Will be collecting office paper, newspaper,
and slick paper (magazines) to recycle.
Throughout April, please bring these items
to the west doors of Central Elementary
during normal school hours.

**During the month of April, please take your
aluminum cans to "Cat's Auto" for recycling!**

(324 Third Street/729-3348)

**All proceeds will be donated to Central School
and the Step Ahead Early Childhood Program
for the purchase of educational materials.**

SOUTHEAST NEBRASKA'S PARENT INVOLVMENT CONFERENCE ~ SATURDAY, MARCH 29th

The region's annual Southeast Nebraska Parent Involvement Conference was held on Saturday, March 29th at the Fairbury Jr/Sr High School.

This conference had been designed specifically for parents of preschool and elementary-age children and included a keynote presentation by Miss Ashley Bauer (Miss Nebraska 2007) entitled, "*Mentoring: Connecting Children with Hope.*"

Additional breakout sessions included:
Local presenters from Fairbury included,

Melissa Mertz and Trudy Spicer, Community Educators – Hope Crisis Center, presenting "Sticks and Stones: Basics of Bullying," Sergeant Doug Klaumann – Fairbury Police Department, who presented "Internet Safety for Parents," and Rick Carmichael, former Fairbury Chief of Police, presenting "Dangers of Meth in Our Communities." Other breakout presentations topics included: "Behavior 101: How to Help Children with Behavioral Challenges," "Graph It in Reading and Math," "Put Reading First, Helping Your Child Learn to Read," "Understanding Diabetes and Childhood," and "Words All Around."

There were nearly 160 individuals registered for this second-annual event in our Southeast Nebraska region. There were no costs for families to attend as this conference was sponsored by ten local-area school districts in collaboration with Educational Service Unit #5 in Beatrice. All registered participants received a complimentary lunch, a certificate of attendance, complimentary childcare and chances at winning great door prizes donated by numerous area businesses, organizations and individuals.

Plans are already underway for next year's Southeast Nebraska Parent Involvement Conference to be held again in March. Make plans now to attend!

