



FAIRBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



MARCH 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

- MARCH 6
NO SCHOOL PREK-6
PLANNING DAY END
OF 3RD QUARTER
1:00 DISMISSAL IN-
SERVICE
- MARCH 7
NO SCHOOL
WINTER BREAK
- MARCH 15
COPACABANA
- MARCH 18
PREK-6 P/T CONFER-
ENCES 4:00-8:00
- MARCH 20
PREK-6 P/T CONFER-
ENCES 1:00-8:00
- MARCH 21 & 24
SPRING BREAK
- MARCH 27
4TH GRADE PROGRAM

He Who Hesitates...

He who hesitates is lost! We've all heard this axiom before, but what does it really mean? Some would say that if you don't take advantage of an opportunity, someone else will and the opportunity will be gone. Others say that if you hesitate, you are exhibiting a sign of a lack of confidence that will lead to failure. I've even heard it used in reference to getting off that touchdown pass or the shot to win the game before being sacked or blocked. The lesson we can learn from this is the importance of taking action and not procrastinating. Theodore Roosevelt said it best: "Do what you can, with what you have, where you are." Conditions are rarely perfect and abilities are never fully realized. The most important thing you can do is make the best of your current situation each and every day!

Many people make the mistake of thinking they don't have enough talent, experience or resources to make a difference. So they wait or refuse to get involved, and life passes by. It is interesting to note that there are only three pure colors – red, blue, and yellow – but that didn't stop

Thoughts of a Superintendent, continued from page 1

Michelangelo from painting masterpieces such as the Sistine Chapel. There are only seven musical notes, but Chopin, Beethoven, and thousands of others have created beautiful music as diverse as the composers themselves. Lincoln's Gettysburg Address contained only 262 words, and 202 of them had only one syllable. It's not the quantity, but the quality that counts. It's not one's sophistication but one's dedication that makes the difference.

That reminds me of a story I once heard about a logging truck that was jammed in a tunnel below train tracks. The truck driver had failed to notice the height restriction and attempted to pass through only to have this truck become wedged in the tunnel. City planners, police officers, firemen, and even engineers were on-site trying to determine the best way to free the truck. It would take time, but they could very carefully remove enough logs to allow the truck to pass through the tunnel. Having a tow truck pull the logging truck backwards, out of the tunnel, had been ruled out because of the possibility of causing structural damage to the tunnel. Then a young girl rode up on her bicycle and after observing the situation asked, "Why don't you just let the air out of the tires?" To the embarrassment of the professionals present, the plan worked beautifully.

Most successful solutions require more "I can" than "I.Q." Make the most of each day by using your current resources and abilities to their fullest. Never underestimate the uncommon greatness that can be achieved by common people with great ambition and the commitment to begin today. Don't wait for a tomorrow that may never come. Do what you can today to the best of your ability.

THE MAKING OF HIGH ACHIEVERS

Are most high achievers born or bred? According to an often-noted research study conducted by Benjamin Bloom, then a noted professor of education at the University of Chicago, most high achievers are bred.

Bloom studied 120 top American artists, athletes, and scholars. He found the secret to success of the outstanding persons was twofold: drive and determination – not natural talent. The five-year study looked at Olympic swimmers, tennis players, sculptors, mathematicians, and research neurologists. In almost every instance, hard work along with parental support was the determinant of success.

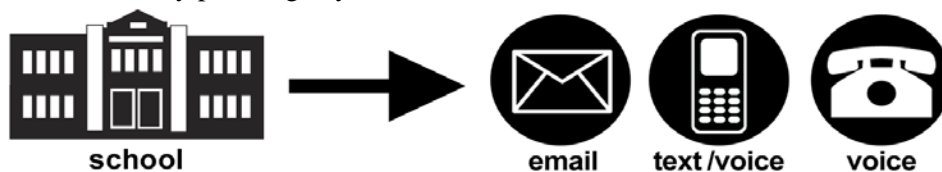
The mathematicians, it was found, were rarely at the top of their class as youngsters. But by the age of fourteen, they were studying twenty-four hours per week, the time most kids spend watching television. Parents of these 120 achievers studied were not outstanding in their children's fields. They merely exposed their children to those fields.

While it is true that the genes and traits you inherit from your parents are the foundation, what you do with the talents and intelligence you were born with determines if you will be a high achiever. I encourage our students to work hard toward achieving all of their goals and for parents to give them the love and support they need. Great people with outstanding achievements are bred utilizing this formula.

"JEFFS RED ALERT"

Messaging Service Used by Fairbury Public Schools

If you signed up for the Fairbury Public Schools messaging service last month, you were immediately notified when school was called off due to the weather. This week those who subscribed also received a reminder that there would be no school on February 28th due to the Fairbury girls qualifying for the state basketball tournament. In the future, students and parents will be notified for such things as activity schedule changes, a bus getting home late from a school activity, and reminders about elementary planning days, to name a few.



This new messaging service is designed to notify staff, students, and parents of important school events. To date, over 320 different individuals have signed up for this service. This includes approximately 150 school employees and nearly 175 parents and students who have subscribed to the service. I encourage all parents to sign up for this great notification service, which can be done through a voice message on your cell or home phone, an e-mail, text message, or all of the above. When you sign up, you determine which type of messages you want to receive and how you want to receive them. The "Jeffs Red Alert" system will instantly send the messages to via the methods you choose. The service will help Fairbury Schools communicate information in a more timely fashion. Information on how to sign up for "Jeffs Red Alert" can be found on the school web site: www.fairburyjeffs.org Below you will also see a short explanation of how to sign up.

To sign up for **text message** notification on your cell phone, please enter your name and mobile number where indicated. If you wish to receive a voice alert in addition to a text alert (at the same mobile number), please check "Allow Voice Calls".

To sign up for **voice alert** notification only and not text messaging, please enter your name and the phone number(s) in the Home and/or Office field. You will also need to enter an e-mail address to receive the necessary authorization code.

To sign up for **e-mail** notification only, enter your name and valid e-mail address in the space provided.

After you choose your method(s) of notification, please select the message groups from which you wish to receive messages and click the CONTINUE button.

You will immediately be sent an e-mail or text message and will need to complete signing up for the messaging service as soon as you get this message. If this is not done, you will need to begin the process from the first step. The entire process will only take a few minutes of your time. Sign up today.

SNACK VOTE 2008!

In recognition of President's Day, Central Elementary students participated in a variety of Presidential activities designed to help them better understand the role of a President. On Tuesday, February 19th, the entire student body assembled for a Presidential Kick Off during which we learned much about Presidents through the book, "What is a President?" Students also discovered that they, too, can be like a President - by being a peacemaker, a community builder, a problem-solver and an honest leader.

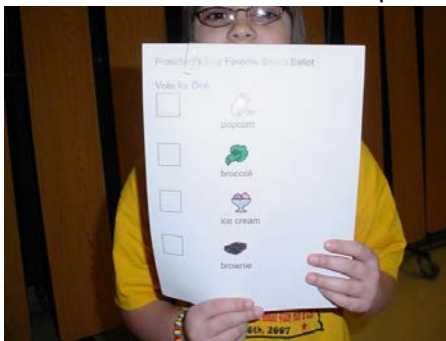


Step Ahead Early Childhood Program teacher, Cari Schroeder presented information about "What is a President" during an all-school assembly.

Central students also experienced Snack Vote 2008! Each student received a special ballot with four choices

to choose from for their favorite snack - popcorn, broccoli, ice cream and a brownie! Students marked their ballots and returned them to a specially-designed ballot box at school. Votes were tallied...and the winner was...ICE CREAM! With a landslide-sized majority, Central Elementary students chose ice cream as their favorite treat. As a result, all students enjoyed a special ice cream treat on Thursday afternoon following an assembly to view an educational video about the history of the presidency in the United States of America.

Our President's Day festivities concluded on Friday with students learning and participating in a Presidential game with Miss Seibolt during Physical Education class, as well as singing several patriotic songs with Mrs. Riggins during Music. We encourage all families to include children in discussions and experiences related to elections, leadership and citizenship!



Second grader, McKenna Troxel, displays the Snack Vote 2008! ballot used for student voting.



Marcus Deras (Step Ahead Preschool) is shown placing his ballot into the official Ballot Box at Central Elementary School.

**Student Need to be Careful with
Internet Profiles
By Jeff Vetter, FHS Principal**

Many students today have personal profiles on a variety of internet based websites. There are a number of social networking sites, two of the more popular sites are “MySpace” and “Facebook”. “MySpace” for example has over 100 million members. Students need to be careful about the information they put on these websites for a variety of reasons. First and foremost is the fact that many pedophiles and child molesters utilize these sites to identify and prey upon their victims. It is possible for a user to establish a false identity. Most of the people who use these sites for illicit purposes do just that, a 13 year old girl may actually be chatting with a 35 year old pedophile and never know it.

These sites allow, and basically invite students to list a multitude of personal information that makes identifying them relatively easy for someone who is knowledgeable about how to contact and question potential victims. In addition to all the personal information, most of these sites allow members to post a personal photo. It is not unusual for kids to post pictures of themselves and their friends, so even though your child may not have an account, their picture may appear on one of these sites. Since there is usually no cost involved, over 61% of teenagers have a personal profile on one of the social networking sites.

Other issues that create problems for youth utilizing these social networking sites may result in legal and school disciplinary actions. Across the country students have been held accountable for identity theft for creating false sites claiming to be another person and then using the site to display inappropriate pictures or to send false communications that may be libelous. Cyber bullying, engaging in illegal acts such as consuming alcohol, and then posting pictures of themselves and their friends have resulted in school disciplinary consequences as well.

I strongly urge parents to know and be familiar with what your kids are up to when they are on the computer at home. If there is sufficient interest, Fairbury Public Schools, in conjunction with the Fairbury Police Department would be more than happy to provide an evening training session to enlighten parents on the topic of internet safety. If interested please contact the school @ 729-6116 and leave your name as an interested party.

**UPWARD BOUND
TAYLOR BIEHL**

March is recruitment time for Upward Bound! Upward Bound is a federally funded grant program through Southeast Community College. It is a college preparatory program intended to assist and encourage talented high school students to achieve their educational goals. This program helps participants succeed in high school and prepare for and enroll in college.

Participants receive academic services (tutoring, study skill workshops, test taking skills, ACT prep workshops, etc.), personal services (one on one meetings with advisors, self improvement workshops, etc.), and college and career services (assistance in completing college applications, financial aid workshops, college campus visits, cultural outings, career inventories, etc.). If you are or have a student whose goal is to obtain a college degree, we may be the program for you!
To qualify, the student must meet the following criteria:

*Student would be a first generation student, meaning neither parent has a four year, Bachelor's degree – AND/OR – the family meets an income requirement set forth by the Department of Education

*Student is at least 13 years of age

*Student is (or will be) a 9th grader, but has not completed the first semester of 10th grade.

*Student is motivated to pursue a college degree.

If you are interested, please contact the Upward Bound office at (402) 228-3468 ext. 1405. Also, be on the lookout for information about our upcoming Open House! (Please note that the Upward Bound program and its events are at no cost to the student or his/her family.)

Upward Bound Participants and Families:

Special Events for March:

JUNIOR SEMINAR: Tuesday, March 4, 2008 – 7:00-8:00 pm at SCC – “How to gain maximum benefit from your college campus visit” and “What to know about Financial Aid before your Senior year.” Parents are welcomed and encouraged to attend Junior Seminars as well!

SATURDAY SESSION: NOTE: this month's Saturday Session is on FRIDAY, March 7, at SCC. Meet in Hoover Hall at 8:15 am. We will be doing a college visit to Union College in Lincoln in the morning. Our afternoon session will be “In the Real World: What you'll want to know about finding your career.” (Transportation will be available for students in Fairbury and Wymore)

Please refer to your March calendar for tutoring and supplemental instruction dates and times!

Is Your Kid College Ready According to ACT?

ACT has developed the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks for each of the 4 areas of the ACT Test, English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science. Benchmark scores are just one factor used in determining the success of a student once in college. If a student achieves the benchmark scores on the ACT, research shows that the student has a 50% chance of earning a B or better and approximately a 75% chance or better of earning a C or better in the corresponding college course or courses. Use your ACT results to determine whether your child has mastered the necessary skills to have a reasonable chance of success in college. Juniors and seniors taking the ACT and sophomores that will be taking the PLAN test in October can use these scores as guidelines. The benchmark scores are as follows:

ACT'S COLLEGE READINESS BENCHMARKS

COLLEGE COURSE OR COURSE AREA	TEST	ACT SCORE (11 TH & 12 TH GRADE)	PLAN SCORE (10 TH GRADE)
English Composition	English	18	15
Algebra	Mathematics	22	17
Social Sciences	Reading	21	17
Biology	Science	24	21

SAVE THIS DATE ~

2nd ANNUAL

SOUTHEAST NEBRASKA PARENT INVOLVMENT CONFERENCE ~

SATURDAY, MARCH 29th

Mark your calendar now and make plans to attend our region's second-annual Southeast Nebraska Parent Involvement Conference to be held on Saturday, March 29th at the Fairbury Jr/Sr High School.

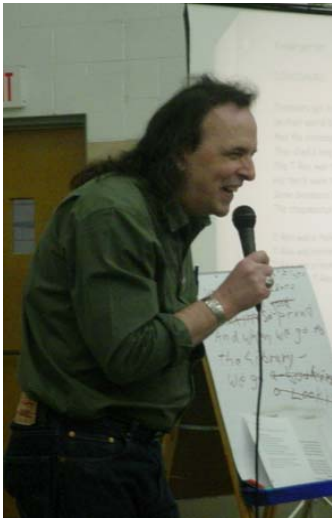
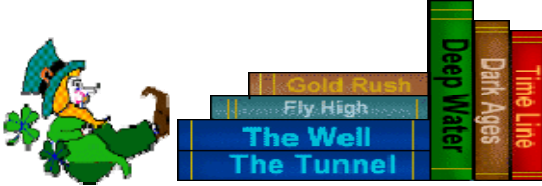
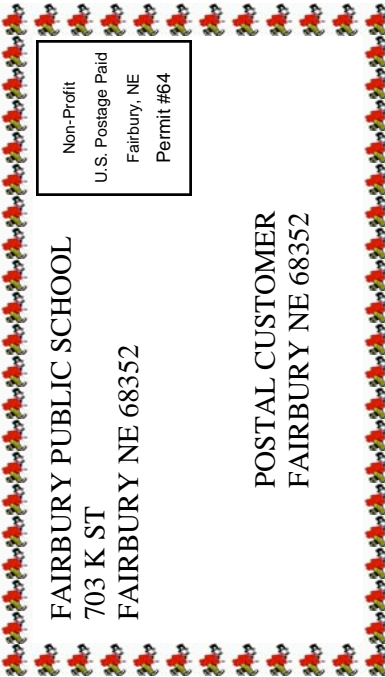
This conference has been designed specifically for parents of preschool and elementary-age children and will include a keynote presentation by Ashley Bauer (Miss Nebraska 2008) entitled, "*Mentoring: Connecting Kids with Hope.*" Additional breakout sessions will include: Make-N-Take Summer Activities/Materials; Bullying Basics; Meth 101; Childhood Diabetes Health Awareness; Internet Safety Awareness for Parents; and many MORE!!!

There is NO Registration Fee as this conference is sponsored by your local school district in collaboration with Educational Service Unit #5. All registered participants will receive a complimentary lunch, a certificate of attendance and a chance at winning a great Door Prize drawing!

Save the Date, continued from page 7

Feel free to bring your child(ren) ages Birth to Grade 5 to the Conference! Complimentary childcare will be available on-site at the Fairbury Jr/Sr High School and will include play time, activities, games, lunch and snacks.

Registration forms were sent home with Fairbury Public School students last week. Additional registration forms are available at either elementary school, as well. The registration deadline is Friday, March 7th! To register return your form to school or contact Mr. Jeremy Christiansen, Principal/
S t u d e n t



Singer/Songwriter Gary Dulabaum engages Central students in literacy through music!

GIVING THE GIFT OF READING

We want to thank all of those in the Fairbury community who supported the local Kiwanis Club in their goal to once again provide each child at Central Elementary School with a brand new book! The “Give the Gift of Reading” Pancake Supper was held on Monday, February 25th at the Fairbury Jr/Sr High School. Each paid admission purchased a book for one child (PreK - 2nd Grade). This celebration was held in conjunction with Dr. Suess’s birthday as recognized through the National Education Association’s *Read Across America* event (a nationwide effort to promote literacy). As well, nationally-renowned singer/songwriter, Gary Dulabaum, was on hand to share his talents (as well as those of Central students) and love for

reading during a family concert also held that evening. The Kiwanis Club raised sufficient funds to enable them to provide each and every child at Central Elementary (PreK-2nd Grade) with a brand new book to add to their home library collections. Thank you to the Fairbury Kiwanis Club for “Giving the Gift of Reading!”