



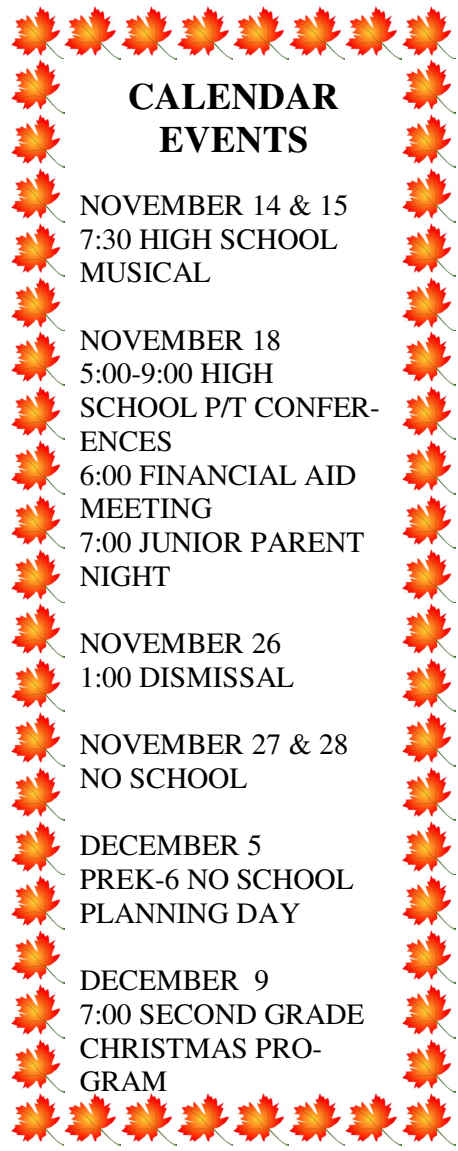
FAIRBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



NOVEMBER 2008

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

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



CALENDAR EVENTS

NOVEMBER 14 & 15
7:30 HIGH SCHOOL
MUSICAL

NOVEMBER 18
5:00-9:00 HIGH
SCHOOL P/T CONFER-
ENCES
6:00 FINANCIAL AID
MEETING
7:00 JUNIOR PARENT
NIGHT

NOVEMBER 26
1:00 DISMISSAL

NOVEMBER 27 & 28
NO SCHOOL

DECEMBER 5
PREK-6 NO SCHOOL
PLANNING DAY

DECEMBER 9
7:00 SECOND GRADE
CHRISTMAS PRO-
GRAM

Thoughts of a Superintendent

From the Desk of Fred Helmink

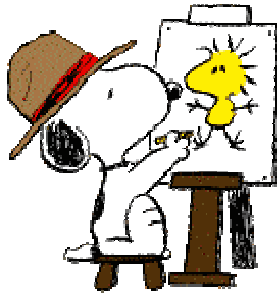
Be Yourself and Make a Difference!

An author once wrote, "The earth is a giant airship. What happens on any part of the ship has an effect on the rest." We are definitely all witnesses to and a part of an ever shrinking world and a global economy. Stock markets are tied together and we've seen how that works recently. We buy goods from and sell them to nearly every nation on this earth. If there is war on one part of the globe, the affect can be seen thousands of miles away. It is true, we are all dependent upon one another and with technology being what it is today, even the smallest of tremors on one continent are soon felt in another.

For a baby, the dependence on others is clearly evident. A baby must be fed, bathed, clothed, sheltered, and nurtured by another or others, each day. Their very life depends on the support of others. As we grow older, we become less dependent, but we are never completely independent. Many people lose sight of this truth. As they become more financially secure and climb their respective professional ladders, they begin thinking that they are self-made. However, any American who visits the banks of the Potomac, where the graves of George Marshall,

John Pershing and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier are found, will quickly be reminded that our lives are very dependent upon others, both present and past. Where would any of us be without the sacrifice of our Founding Fathers and the brave soldiers who fought to secure our future and freedom? Where would we be without the support of family, friends, teachers, and others who have touched our lives?

This reminds me of a recent e-mail I received and pondered. If you would take the time to answer the quiz below, I think you will get the message. The following is the philosophy of Charles Schulz, the creator of the "Peanuts" comic strip. You don't have to actually answer the questions. Just read them straight through and you'll get the point.



1. Name the five wealthiest people in the world.
2. Name the last five Heisman trophy winners.
3. Name the last five winners of the Miss America Pageant.
4. Name ten people who have won the Nobel or Pulitzer Prize.
5. Name the last half dozen American Academy winners for the best actor or actress.
6. Name the last decade's worth of World Series winners.

How did you do?

The point is none of us remember the headliners of yesterday. These are no second-rate achievers. They are the best in their fields. But applause dies. Awards tarnish. Achievements are forgotten. Accolades and certificates are buried with their owners.

1. List a few teachers who aided your journey through school.
2. Name three friends who have helped you through a difficult time.
3. Name five people who have taught you something worthwhile.
5. Think of a few people who have made you feel appreciated and special!!!
6. Think of five people you enjoy spending time with.



Easier?

The Lesson: The people who make a difference in your life are not the ones with the most credentials., the most money, or the most awards. They simply are the ones who care the most.

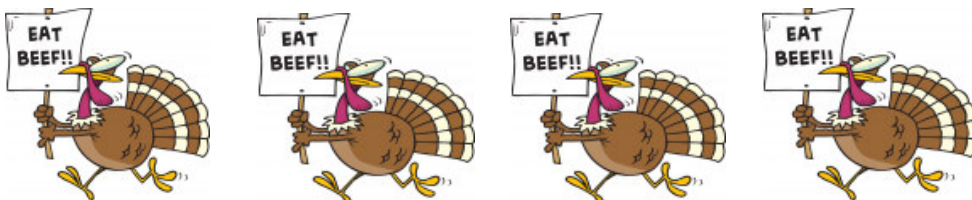


We may not win any awards, make a notable invention, or discover a new element, but we can all be a positive role model for our children, students, friends, and others with whom our lives directly or indirectly touch. This is the greatest legacy we can leave on this shrinking earth. Make the most of your day, today! As Charlie Brown would say, **“Be Yourself! Everyone Else is Taken!”**



CENTRAL'S FAMILY NIGHT WAS TURKEY-RIFFIC!!!

Lots of Turkey Talk among students and their families was observed during our recent Central Elementary Family Night held on November 6th! Thank you to those family members (over 200) who were able to attend, to participate in the fall-themed activities, and share in the excitement with their children.



**PROPOSED SCHEDULE CHANGE
AT JR-SR HIGH SCHOOL
By Jeff Vetter, Principal**

Does providing additional one on one instructional time for struggling students and rewarding students who are successful make sense to you? How about increasing overall contact time between teachers and all students? What about reducing the amount of class time missed due to extra-curricular activities? If you see these as positive changes, then you will probably agree that the proposed schedule change that would take effect the second semester of this school year makes sense. In addition, this plan would decrease the amount of time students spend with a substitute teacher who, through no fault of their own, may not be as qualified to teach some areas as the regular classroom teacher.

What is this plan? Before explaining exactly what this plan would entail, I would like to discuss what it won't do. First, it will not require any change in teacher staffing. Second, it will not result in any increased costs. Third, it will not require any change to the present bus schedule. The plan was developed with one major goal – provide additional instructional time for students who are struggling! Last week we had 52 names on our “down list”, or academic ineligibility list. That means 52 students were failing in at least one subject.

The changes to the schedule that are being considered would involve a number of adjustments. The school day would start at 8:25 a.m. instead of 8:30 a.m. each day. Regular dismissal time would still be 3:35 p.m. each day. Passing time, the time between classes when students move from one classroom to the next, would be reduced to 3 minutes from the current 6 minutes. The reward part of the equation occurs on Friday for any student not on the “down list” that week. Starting classes 5 minutes earlier each day and reducing passing period time saves enough time in a week to allow those students who are not on the “down list” to get out at 2:30 on Fridays. Over the course of a school year we would actually gain about 3 ½ hours of instructional time for all students using this format.

Those students who are on the down list would be required to stay until the regular dismissal time at 3:35 p.m. on Friday to work with their teachers in subjects that they are down in. No practices would be allowed in order to have ALL teachers available to assist students. Due to travel for extra-curricular events, primarily athletic contests, students may be required to leave as early as 1:30 p.m. on any given day with Friday's being the most frequent. By dismissing at 2:30 p.m. on Friday, students would miss less instructional time. Since this new schedule would have less regular classroom instructional time on Friday afternoons it would mean coaches leaving for activities would not miss as much instructional time. A 1:30 p.m. dismissal would mean a teacher/coach would miss only one hour of instruction instead of two under our current schedule. Therefore, students would spend less time with a substitute teacher and more time with their regular classroom teacher who happens to coach on Friday afternoons.

As previously mentioned, the goal is simple, provide more one on one instructional time for struggling students while at the same time rewarding those students who keep their grades above passing. As a side benefit, this schedule change would slightly increase instructional time for all students. Monitored activities for those students who ride the bus, but who do not need the extra academic time (about 45 students, primarily Junior High) would include such things as access to the computer lab, open gym/weight room, social, or movie time.

RALLY 'ROUND THE FLAG

Central Elementary School's Veteran's Day observance activities included a "Rally 'Round the Flag" Program on Tuesday, November 11th. Just as school began, students and staff assembled for the Presentation of Colors courtesy of representatives from the Fairbury VFW. Following a school wide recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, High School Music Instructor, Mr. Schellenberger sang the National Anthem. The ceremony continued with students watching a video presented by Jennifer Love Hewitt sharing the meaning of Veteran's Day. Special guest, Freddie Drexler then spoke and shared photographs related to his recent Honor Flight trip to Washington, D.C. that enabled veterans of World War II to see the World War II Memorial.



CALLING ALL PARENTS!!!

Families are encouraged to mark calendars and plan to attend our next Fairbury PTA (Parent-Teacher Association) meeting scheduled for Monday, November 17th. The PTA meeting will be held in Room 217 at Central Elementary and is scheduled to begin at 7:00 p.m.



Complimentary childcare will be available at Central School for parents attending the meeting. We thank our local high school's FCCLA Chapter members for sponsoring and organizing the free childcare opportunity for our district's families. Refreshments will also be available at the PTA meeting.

The agenda for this PTA meeting will include an update on the annual magazine sales fundraiser, PTA-sponsored programs, and planning for next month's holiday-themed activities for elementary students. Your ideas and suggestions are needed and valued. Please plan to attend!



JUMP ROPE FOR HEART EVENT AT JEFFERSON INTERMEDIATE A SUCCESS!

On Nov. 6th, students at Jefferson Intermediate in Fairbury jumped all over heart disease and stroke by participating in Jump Rope for Heart. The students raised more than \$3,000.00 for the American Heart Association and helped celebrate the 30th anniversary of the fund-raising event. As an extra incentive to help celebrate the anniversary, the top girl and boy receiving donations gets to go to Subway for lunch with Mrs. Weise. The classroom that raised the most money will receive a party as well.



The donations that were raised during Jump Rope for Heart help fund research to fight heart disease and stroke and also support the



American Heart Association's public and professional education programs. Heart disease is the No. 1 killer in America and stroke is No. 3.

"This year's event was a success," said Nichole Seibolt, Jump Rope for Heart coordinator. "We're very proud of all the jumpers, and we all had a lot of fun."

Jump Rope for Heart is a program that promotes physical fitness and heart health through the fun activity of jumping rope. It also helps our children under-

stand the importance of community service and physical activity while helping to save lives. It is co-sponsored by the American Heart Association and the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.



WINTER SPORT CONCERNS

The Fairbury Jeffs would like to thank everyone for their continued support of the athletic teams. Our teams really enjoy having the positive support of all the fans at our games. As we get closer to the winter sports season there are a few areas of concern that need to be addressed. These concerns are primarily addressed for the safety of all parties involved.

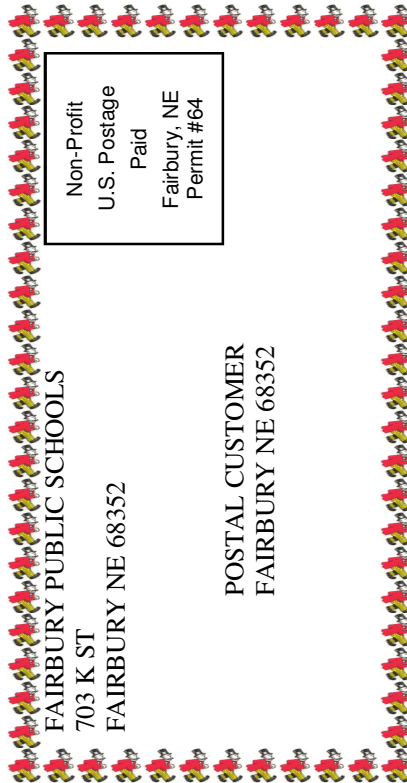
1. We usually have very large crowds at our home activities. We really need to make a great attempt to not have fans leaving their seats while live play is going on. The reason for this is that most officials like and need to be “as wide as possible” as they travel from one end of the gym to the other during a basketball game. This means that they may be running out of bounds where many of our fans walk when they go to their seats. By waiting until a “dead ball” or “time-out” it will significantly reduce that chance of a collision happening and people will remain safe. This includes children, students, as well as adults.
2. The second concern is that we have too many elementary students that are not in the stands watching the game, nor are they being supervised by their parents. This concern brings up a huge liability factor in that we have a number of these students that are “running” around the commons area and the hallway by the gym playing tag or “horsing around”. On most nights we have the upper bleachers opened up and we supply supervision in that area for the students from Jefferson and Central. We are asking that those students stay in those bleachers or with their parents to watch and cheer on the “Jeffs” and limit their time in the commons area.
3. The third area of concern is having people on the main playing floor before, during or after the game. With the winter weather and the use of salt on the sidewalks the salt gets tracked in on the gym floor which causes damage. Weather carried in from snow or rain also causes the floor to be slick and unsafe for the players.

The concerns listed above are all about liability. We need to make sure that we keep our activities and building safe for the players, students, parents and our guests.

We appreciate your continued support of the “Jeffs” and we are looking forward to a successful winter sports season.

NO WINTER SPORT SCRIMMAGES

Fairbury Jr-Sr High School will not be hosting a “scrimmage” night on Monday, December 1st. We will, however, be hosting a mandatory player-parent-coach meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m. on December 1st. ALL PARENTS of a student-athlete out for a winter sport (basketball and wrestling) MUST be at this meeting. We appreciate your attention to this matter and are looking forward to seeing you on Monday, December 1st at 7:00 p.m. in the BFAC.



Thanksgiving

It's the time of year when we're reminded to give thanks.

Instead of waiting until next year to be reminded,

Let's make every day one of thanksgiving;

After all, each day is a unique gift.

So, give a hug for no reason;

Say I love you, just because;

Share a smile with a stranger;

Take the time to count your blessings;

Don't take anything or anyone for granted;

And end each day with no regrets.

Thank you, my friends and family,

For sharing, caring, laughing and crying with me.

I'm truly blessed to have each and every one of you in my life

And I am thankful you have allowed me

To be a part of yours.

May you and yours have a safe and memorable Thanksgiving.

Author Unknown