

MUSTANG NEWS

DECEMBER 2018

Jeff Dicks, Superintendent

From The Desk of Mr. Dicks

It is that time of year that we want to be prepared for winter weather. I begin communicating with area superintendents to gain information they have regarding road conditions, and what the weather is doing in their area typically the night before any event. While I look at forecasts and utilize all the technology, I still like to get out and drive the roads as much as I can. I also always want to make the most informed decision regarding travel. I take into account the 15-18 years old student who may be driving alone for the first time, the students who have before school activities, and the kids who walk to school or to a bus stop. I also think about our drivers who basically supervise an entire classroom with their back turned while they are driving in inclement weather. The absolute priority is the safety of our students. I am also an optimist at heart, so I predict we will have a mild winter with no missed days.

It is extremely important if your student is ill you make the call to let the school know. During normal winter conditions, we especially want to account for all of

the students in a timely fashion. We appreciate your communication for the safety of all kids.

Weather Related Notifications

Weather-related notifications will be communicated in a number of different ways. Listed below are the different ways we will be communicating these notifications.

In addition to our Newell-Fonda Mobile App, you may also listen for notifications from the sources below:

- KAYL Storm Lake Radio
- School Alerts and Infinite Campus Messenger
- KTIV TV station (Sioux City)
- KCCI TV station (Des Moines)
- Newell-Fonda Community School on Facebook and Twitter using the hashtag #newellfonda or @nfmustangs

Probably the two fastest and efficient methods are Facebook and Twitter. Make sure that the announcement is official and not just someone posting their opinion.

Alynn Coppock, HS Principal

November – the month of thankfulness. At Newell-Fonda we definitely have a lot to be thankful for. To begin the month our high school students enjoyed another successful FCR Day (My Future! My Career! My Responsibility!). Over 30 business people and college reps were here to help teach our students how to be career and college ready once they graduate from Newell-Fonda. A big thank you to Mrs. Crystal Nieland, Mrs. Crystal Carlson, and Mrs. Beth Olsen for organizing this event. Also, thank you to Dawn Baughman and the kitchen staff for preparing our professional lunch and thank you to Tyson for donating the meat. This day

would not have been as successful without the coordination of our staff, community members, and students!

I am also thankful for the touching Veteran's Day Assembly that was held on November 9th organized by Mrs. Jen Tovar and the N-F High School Student Council. Thank you to Mr. Ron Witham for speaking during the assembly and inspiring all of us to find opportunities for service in our own lives. The program proved to not only be educational, but also reminded us to be thankful for the sacrifices our Veterans have made and continue to make to ensure our safety. I would also like to commend our volleyball and football teams for their successful seasons. It is rewarding to see all the hard work of our student athletes pay off - getting the opportunity to play in a play-off or regional finals atmosphere really makes all the time, sweat, and sacrifice worth it. I am also honored to announce that our volleyball team, football team, and cheerleading squad all received the top scholastic honor in the state for maintaining an outstanding team GPA. We are definitely proud of our student athletes for their hard work on and off of the field/court. Great job, Mustangs!! I would also like to recognize the volleyball coaches, players, and fans for receiving a perfect sportsmanship rating – this is definitely something to be very proud of and an example hopefully we can all follow as we go into the basketball season!! Speaking of the basketball season, the girls Jamboree was held on November 17th and the boys team played on November 24th. The girls first regular season game was November 20th at Spirit Lake and the boy's debut was on November 27th against Spencer. Be sure to check our website for up-to-date basketball schedules. Hopefully, you will find time this season to make it to the games and support our Mustangs!

Students also had the opportunity to select their Winter Explorium project for January's WE-Term right before Thanksgiving break. Thanks to the support of our community, we will once again have the internship opportunity available for our seniors. We will also have 6 project options accessible for our 9th-11th graders. We will have some of the same projects from last year, but we will also have some new projects to offer. We are all looking forward to another great learning experience during WE-Term!

November/December will also give us a chance to be thankful for our students' talents. Our Drill Team will be competing at the State competition on

November 29th in Des Moines. The High School Winter Concert will be held on December 18th at 7:00 p.m., so don't forget to mark your calendars to enjoy some holiday music. I think it's evident that we have a lot to be thankful for at Newell-Fonda. Again, thank you for all you do to support your student's education. Enjoy the holiday season!



*Welcome to the Newell - Fonda
2018 Veterans Day Program!*

Order of Events:

- Posting of the Colors
- Pledge of Allegiance
- National Anthem
Performed by the N-F Band
- Poems by Mrs. Hess and
Mr. Elsen's 1st Graders
- "A Tribute to the Armed Forces"
Performed by the band and choir
- Military Homecoming Video
Ron Witham
- Alumni Video
- Freedom Quilts Fundraiser
- Taps by Tyler Mandernach and Gabe Seivers

Please join us for coffee and cake and cake following the program!

Dick Jungers, PK-8 Principal

Conferences were held a few weeks ago which was a great time for teachers to meet with parents. It was great for teachers to meet face to face with parents and to get all stakeholders involved in every student's

education. We had 225 conferences attended out of 241 scheduled appointments in the Elementary for a 93.4% attendance rate. In the Middle School we had 145 appointments kept out of the 168 scheduled for a 86% attendance rate. I would like to give a special thank you to all parents who took the time to meet their child's teacher and have those powerful conversations with staff about their student.

As the weather turns from comfortable to cold, we need to make sure that we are dressing our students appropriately for the weather. Elementary students should have coats, hats, mittens (gloves), boots and snow pants for those unbearably cold days. It would also be a good idea to talk about safety with your children. As the sun goes down earlier, it's harder for small children to be seen and cars may have a difficult time stopping on slick streets. Another good idea would be to sign up for the weather alerts on our homepage so that you can have an alert sent to your e-mail address or have a text message sent to you if school is let out early or is going to have a late start. It would also be a good idea to go over your family plan if school lets out early or we have a late start. Every year we have a couple of students who are confused on where they should go or who is going to pick them up when school is called off. A reminder that we do provide before and after school care for those who are interested.

Creating learning opportunities at home is a great way to ensure your child has success at school. A conversation with your child's teacher is a great way to find out what things you can do at home to maximize their learning opportunities. The school provides many resources including: take home books, IXL Math, Reading Eggs, and numerous other learning opportunities. As we continue to implement the Iowa Core Curriculum, we will be increasing the expectations that we have for each of our students. Students will be required to have more skills, and are expected to spend more time in reading and math to meet those requirements. A few minutes each night at home with a parent or sibling can go a long way in development of those skills. Reading with your child and working on IXL

Math will assist that development and help your child meet those expectations.

Here is an article about how to encourage [kids to handle bullying](#): It also contains some important information on how we approach bullying and bully-like behavior from a student. Also, looking at the parent perspective is very important. This article helps us identify how we should handle some of those tough situations. It is always helpful to ask your child what role they played in any situation of this nature to help identify the true nature of the situation. It is very common for parents to accept what their student says about a situation, and to draw a conclusion based on their perception of the information they received. It is important to identify that there are always two sides to every story and to recognize that in a lot of cases the information that a parent gets from their child may be filtered or some key details may be overlooked by the student that gives a clear picture of what really occurred. In these types of situations it is always best to check with your student's teacher to help put the information together.

Staff Updates

Craig Davis, HS Resource/Senior Internship

An area of focus during this school year with the twelve students that we are working with has been transition. The goal of transition is to get high school students, parents, and the school working together to provide a smooth transition from high school into the world of work or college. This transition will focus specifically on the three areas of living, learning, and working. Students are administered a series of questions to see where their interests are and where they see themselves being successful after high school. As students get older, they are

introduced to Vocational Rehabilitation Services, out of Storm Lake, which may help them locate a job, find housing, and assist with many other services that are vital to life after high school for many students.

All Seniors at Newell-Fonda have the opportunity during WE Term to take part in an internship in a career area of their choice. Our students get to spend time with and learn from professionals. Businesses in our area are extremely generous with their time and resources to give our students a great experience and we appreciate it very much.

WE-Term will run from January 3rd through the 15th.

Mindy Pedersen works in the resource room with me this year and I appreciate all she does for the kids in our school. She is a great person and a great teacher. She is asked to perform many different duties throughout the day, she is knowledgeable and caring, and she is extremely professional in carrying out her many responsibilities. The students in this school district are fortunate to have her.

Go Mustangs!

Craig Davis



Susan Hess, 1st Grade

“Imagine a world where people look out for each other. Where we all pay it forward. Where success is measured in selfless acts. Where kindness is the philosophy of life. It’s easy to think of kindness as an innate talent, something you either possess... or don’t. But that’s not the case. Kindness is a skill – and like any skill, it can be developed with practice and repetition.” These are the ideas of the people at randomactsofkindness.org.

November was an exciting month in our first grade classroom. My 15 energetic and eager first graders were all members of our Kindness Club. Every day we performed an act of kindness towards others. Every morning, we read the challenge of the day and tried to complete it before the end of the day. I loved seeing more kindness in the classroom, halls and on the playgrounds. It was exciting to think that these 6 and 7 year olds are already making the world a better place. Acts of kindness are not only special for the receiver, but also feel good as the doer!

On November 13th we celebrated World Kindness Day by creating kindness posters and hanging them up in all the school’s hallways. We also kept track of how many random acts of kindness they completed during the day. Our goal was to reach 100 random acts of kindness. As a class we were able to reach 146 kind acts. **No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted. - Aesop**

Keisha Boevers, Elementary Title

The 2018-2019 school year is off to an excellent start. We are busy working hard and making great progress in Title Reading & Math. During my Title Reading time we work on phonics skills, reading strategies, comprehension skills and reading fluently. Although our students are working hard at school, we still encourage them to read every night at home. Here are some tips for when you read with your child at home.

Make Reading A Part of Your Family Time! - Family time is so important, so why not make reading part of that valuable time with your kids? Here are some reading ideas for bringing reading into your daily family activities:

- Read bedtime stories
- Play a board game (Have your child read the playing cards to you)

- Explore books! Visit the library or bookstore. This gives them a chance to find books that interest them.
- Read a recipe and cook something together

Reading Tips:

- Choose books that match your child's likes and interest
- Read a sentence and have your child repeat it
- Talk about the story as you read it. Examples: What do you think will happen next? What does this story remind you of? How do you think this character feels?
- Don't be afraid to read the same book again! Encourage your child to re-read favorite stories. This helps to build fluency and accuracy.
- Don't immediately tell an unknown word to your student. Instead ask them to: sound out the word, break the word into chunks, try a different vowel sound (long/short), use illustrations for clues, skip the word, re-read the sentence and go back - what word would make sense?
- Be patient, correct gently and praise with enthusiasm.

Advanced Readers:

- Notice interesting, new vocabulary words, and make it a challenge to use them in conversation.
- Read with expression
- Compare and contrast books

Dr. Seuss said, "You have Brains in your Head. You have Feet in your Shoes. You can Steer yourself any Direction you Choose." So Newell-Fonda students keep up the great work and show us what you can do!



Marcia Johnson, Business Manager

Business Office/School Board Update

Marcia Johnson, Board Secretary/School Business Official (SBO)

Shauna Black, Business Office/Human Resources Manager

Another school year is well underway. This summer brought yet another big change to the business office here at school. As I'm sure everyone knows by now, Superintendent Rob Olsen resigned his position effective July 1. It was a pleasure to work with Rob for three years, and we wish him the very best. Anytime there is a change of superintendents in a school district, this means an adjustment for those of us who work closely with the administration.

On July 1, Jeff Dicks returned to Mustang Country and assumed the responsibilities of superintendent once again. He is a familiar face to most of us and he knows Newell-Fonda quite well, which made for a fairly easy transition. Shauna and I have tried to give assistance to Mr. Dicks as he catches up to speed on the changes that have occurred over the past three years in the business office and with the school board.

Of course, the Iowa Department of Education is always finding new ways to do old things (and adding more new things too!), which keeps us constantly learning and adapting to changes. One of the biggest challenges this year is the re-coding of school-level expenditures. It sounds so simple as I write this article, but it truly is a major overhaul of our accounting codes. The first phase of this conversion added nearly 500 codes to our chart of accounts - whew! The Department of Education has also developed a new consolidated application for much of the federal funding revenue

we receive, as well as a new process for submitting claims to receive the payments. Exciting stuff!

This fall I was asked to be a mentor for a new School Business Official (SBO) in our area. In 2012 the state legislature passed a law that requires all new SBOs in the state to enter into a formal mentoring arrangement for one year as they work toward their licensing requirements. I am looking forward to the challenge of being a mentor, and I'm confident that this opportunity will help me to grow professionally and will bring benefit back to Newell-Fonda.

Leah Rosado, Vocal Music

From the Choir Room

Concert Season is here! **Kindergarten - 4th grade concert is Thursday, December 6th, 5-8 band and choir is Thursday, December 13, and HS Band and Choir is Tuesday, December 18th.**

This year the Newell-Fonda choirs have really divided a line between first and second quarters. During first quarter we focused on musical development and history. Now during second quarter we are solely focused on choir. The students are expected to sing with proper singer's posture, their best tone and diction, and positive energy and effort. The Middle School has really noticed the difference! 5th and 6th graders and even 4th graders are responding to the challenge of "grown up" music. They have to read from a written piece of music with notes rather than just a word sheet. This is proving to be difficult for them but it is fun to watch them respond to the challenge! We have some very musical students at Newell-Fonda!

In October, 12 HS Choir students attended Heartland Honor Choir in Estherville at Iowa Lakes Community College. They rehearsed all day and then performed a concert with 168 other HS students from 7 different schools. Then in November, we had 8 JH Choir students attend Northwest Iowa Honor Choir in Storm Lake with MANY other 7th and 8th graders from 42 different Iowa schools. Honor Choirs offer the opportunity to participate in the larger world of music. Choir is a team activity that many other people practice and train in. Going to these events opens our students' eyes to the fact that so many people out there sing. One HS student told me with huge eyes, "this is the coolest thing I've ever been to!"

On Friday, November 10th 50 student musicians sang and played a combined band/choir piece to honor our United States Veterans. The HS and JH Choirs and the HS Band performed Armed Service Medley for our Veterans. This is a hard song. The students rose to the challenge and were pleased to be able to honor our local veterans.



