

'Rider News

From The Superintendent - Todd Porter

"It is my extreme pleasure to recommend (fill in name here) for your (scholarship, college, possible employment, etc.)" That is how those letters of recommendation begin. I write many of them, as do teachers, counselors, principals and other adults in a young person's life. We write about accomplishments, awards, grades, extracurricular achievements and so on, trying to get across the point that your son or daughter is deserving of receiving something that many other students are also applying for. For many committees it is a very tough call to make. There are other things that I hope that students get out of the formal schooling process, however.

I came across an article by C. Mielke entitled "What Students Really Need to Hear" while reading the dozens of articles I read every night trying to keep up with all of the news and politics related to education and legal matters. If

you come across it I highly recommend it. I guess the main thrust of the article is that are so many things other than academic subjects that teachers are trying to teach students that are so very important. They come from holding students accountable for attendance, having them do assignments and turn them in on time, trying to do something that may be more challenging than they have ever done before, and maybe even not understand something the first or second or third time they try to do something.

Life can be harsh, working with someone you don't get along with may not be easy, pushing yourself to do something when it would so much easier to just get by is tough, but these are the things that happen in life. Those who are successful develop resiliency, learn to overcome adversity, and this is what prepares students for life after school. School can be tough at times, but most of us face many

more difficulties in life that are much more difficult than anything we ever faced in school. We try to teach students to face challenges, face your fears, and not quit when quitting would be so much easier. A direct quote from this article states: "You are either the muscle or the dirt. You either take resistance and grow stronger or blow with the wind and erode." Strong words, but it is why we ask students to do more than they think they can do. So they don't end up quitting, drifting away, and not be able to deal with the tough times. Having said that, I feel good about the students who are graduating this month. They'll be prepared to face the tough times, dig in, and get it done. I'll miss you guys, and we will always be here for you. Congratulations, job well done.

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Special points of interest:

- May 1 - Awards Night @ 7:00 PM
- May 5 - Elementary Spring Program. 6:30 Pre-K thru 3rd. 7:30 4th-6th.
- May 10 - Graduation @ 10:30 AM
- May 12 - School Board Meeting @ 7:30 PM in Bartley
- May 21 - Last Day Of School Dismissal at 12:45 elementary 1:00 PM High School

High School News - Mr. Springer

The 2013-14 year has been a great educational success at the Junior/Senior high school. The staff and the students have spent a lot of time working toward reaching the goals they set back in August.

The month of May is a short month in terms of school. These are a few dates that you may want to keep open on your calendar.

*May 10th Graduation.

*May 21st is the last day of school for 2013-14 school year.

Teachers will be in and out the fol-

lowing week as they get their rooms ready for summer cleaning.

The new building at the football field is almost complete for concessions and restrooms. The track and field events have also seen some improvements from last year.

Summer school will once again take place this year to help students catch up on credit recovery. In the Junior High the summer school program is designed to get the students who may be low in English or Math skill extra help. This will hopefully ensure they are

ready for the next level of course work when school starts. We will be posting the times and information about summer school prior to school being let out for summer.

The class schedule for next year is getting close to being finalized. We have spent a lot of time working to ensure students are able to take the classes they wish. If you have not visited with your child I would encourage you to ask them what they signed up for in the fall semester.

If you should have any questions please call or stop in.

Elementary News - Mrs. Baumbach

I would like to say thank you for all of your support this year! It has been a good year for me and I hope for all of the students. I am grateful that I had a chance to get to know all of the students and parents at the elementary and reconnect with many past acquaintances.

The elementary field day will be May 9th at the high school track in Bartley. It will be a fun way to

celebrate the end of NeSA testing. The students have been very diligent with the testing and they deserve a fun break. I want to say "Thank You" to John and Michelle O'Dea for providing hamburgers for all of the students that day.

I would like to introduce you to the new principal for next year, Mrs. Latta. She has lived in Southwest Nebraska all of her life and been involved in education as a music

teacher, reading specialist and a principal. She is active in her church and Community Theater. She is very excited to be coming to Southwest Public Schools next year. I have known and worked with her for many years professionally and she is going to be a great fit for the school. Be sure and stop by and welcome her next year.

Jr. High Volleyball - Mrs. Wyatt

On March 21st and 22nd, Coach Wyatt and Sasha Burton took thirteen junior high volleyball players to the Ogallala Midnight Madness volleyball camp in Ogallala, Nebraska. We played volleyball until after midnight on Friday and we were up playing by 8:25 on Saturday morning. We played some very good

teams from all over Nebraska.

Coach Morgan and his wife have a very impressive camp.

I would like to thank Sasha for going above and beyond to help me with this weekend of volleyball. I appreciate her help very much.



Crayfish and The Third Grade - Mrs. Brown

Third grade was home to 13 crayfish this spring. Crayfish can also be called crawfish or crawdads. They are supposed to be relatively easy to keep for months. The students were so excited to learn about and care for these animals. They were kept in basins with wa-

ter that had been set out for several days in order to remove the chlorine. Several little huts were in each basin to see how territorial the crayfish were. The students took turns feeding the crawfish fish food and moving them from the feeding tubs back to their living

quarters. The structures of the crayfish were carefully studied and the students easily identified the males and females. The crayfish lived one week, we think, because they were not native to this region. Next year we hope to bring in some local crayfish and try again.

Physical Education - Mrs. Barnett

May is Physical Fitness and Sports month. As school is winding down and the weather is getting nicer, I encourage you to get out and be active. The Southwest Jr.-Sr. High School students that are involved in PE and Strength Training have been busy all school year participating in many different activi-

ties. From the usual football, volleyball, and basketball to lacrosse, badminton, and archery, we have been having fun. The strength training classes have also noticed the benefits of lifting weights and increasing muscle strength. So whatever you choose, the most important thing is to be active and

have fun!

We hope to see everyone at the Elementary Field Day on May 9th!!

Elementary Volleyball camp will be held after school from 3:45 to 5:15 on May 12th-16th. This is a free camp and anyone that has not had a chance to sign-up can contact Mrs. Barnett or Mrs. Wilson.

Counselor's Corner - Mr. Loshbaugh

SENIORS

Tips for college loans: borrow wisely, borrow only what you need even if it is less than the amount offered in your award letter, File the FAFSA at fafsa.gov each year you attend college, continue to look for scholarships while you're in college, keep track of your student loan debt throughout college at nslds.ed.gov.

- Be aware of orientation days at your selected college
- Start a list of dorm room items
- At graduation seniors will receive a packet containing many items needed to claim their scholarships and a final transcript. Please do not lose this packet.
- Check out the "Students Transitioning to College" section at EducationQuest.org.

JUNIORS

- Register by May 9th for the June 14th ACT
- This year's seniors had 4 students make RPAC all-conference Academic team by scoring a 24 or higher on the ACT. This is a nice award and makes it much easier to find scholarships. Please remember all college bound students should take the ACT test 3-4 times by January 2015 in order to maximize scholarship opportunities.
- Continue campus visits and try to have your college choices narrowed to four (4) by the fall.
- Pay attention to the seniors and the scholarships and awards they are receiving to best prepare yourselves for next year.

Elementary Quiz Bowl - Mrs. Frecks

The Elementary Quiz Bowl team earned first place honors at the annual ESU 15 competition. Members of the team are Justin Brush, Julia Holdcroft, Rachel Moore, Jake O'Dea, Lanie Overton, Allison Rippe, Elaine Roggenkamp, Alyssa Springer, Matt VanPelt, Austin Adam, Jadyn Brooks, Alyse Foster, Kylea Stritt, Lillie Schultz, and Kailey Wilcox.

Our final Competition of the year will be on May 1, 2014, at Maywood.



Board of Education Meeting
Southwest Public Schools
District 179
April 14, 2014

President Duane Teter called the regular meeting of the Southwest Public Schools Board of Education to order at 7:30 p.m. on April 14, 2014 at the Southwest Elementary School in Indianola.

Present: Tom Sughrue, Steve McConville, Duane Teter, Ondrea McConville, Principals Lynda Baumbach and Matt Springer, Superintendent Todd Porter, and Patricia Smith.

Absent: Kevin Potthoff and Steve Daffer.

Visitors: Mary Marsh, Cody Gerlach, Mary Shirkey, Linda Clark, Don Ellicott, Julie Ellis, Don and Donna Behnke, Kristy Kreiling, and Jason Kloepping.

President Teter observed Open Meeting Law requirements.

Moved by S. McConville, seconded by Sughrue, to excuse absent Board Members Kevin Potthoff and Steve Daffer. Ayes: Sughrue, S. McConville, O. McConville, and Teter. Nays: None. Absent: Potthoff and Daffer. Motion carried.

Moved by Sughrue, seconded by O. McConville, to approve the board meeting agenda as presented. Ayes: O. McConville, Sughrue, S. McConville, and Teter. Nays: None. Absent: Potthoff and Daffer. Motion carried.

Notice of the meeting was given in advance by the board-approved method of meeting notice. Notice of the meeting was given in advance to all members prior to the meeting date.

Donna Behnke informed and invited the Board to the Class of 2014 breakfast planned for May 9 at 8:00 a.m. at the Saint Catherine's Church Hall in Indianola.

Superintendent Porter reviewed the honors and awards of Southwest students during the past month.

Moved by Sughrue, seconded by S. McConville, to approve the March 10, 2014 board meeting minutes as presented. Ayes: O. McConville, Teter, S. McConville, and Sughrue. Nays: None. Absent: Potthoff and Daffer. Motion carried.

Moved by S. McConville, seconded by O. McConville, to approve the claims as presented. Ayes: S. McConville, Sughrue, O. McConville, and Teter. Nays: None. Absent: Potthoff and Daffer. Motion carried.

The treasurer's report was presented to the Board.

Since the elementary restroom renovation has been advertised for bids twice, the district is able to solicit hiring local

contractors to proceed with the project.

Moved by O. McConville, seconded by Sughrue, to amend the 125 Cafeteria Plan to include Health Savings Accounts. Ayes: S. McConville, Sughrue, O. McConville, and Teter. Nays: None. Absent: Potthoff and Daffer. Motion carried.

Steve Daffer arrived at the meeting at 7:56 p.m.

Moved by O. McConville, seconded by Daffer, to terminate the two and one-half month grace period for the 125 Cafeteria Plan and approve a \$500 carryover of unreimbursed medical care to the following plan year. Ayes: Daffer, Sughrue, S. McConville, O. McConville, and Teter. Nays: None. Absent: Potthoff. Motion carried.

Moved by Sughrue, seconded by S. McConville, to approve the purchase of replacement heating/cooling units for five elementary classrooms each of the next three years. Ayes: Sughrue, S. McConville, Daffer, O. McConville, and Teter. Nays: None. Absent: Potthoff. Motion carried.

Moved by O. McConville, seconded by Daffer, to lease a water softener for the elementary kitchen from Messersmith Water Treatment. The administration was instructed to accept the lowest bid for adapting the building plumbing to the water softener. Ayes: Sughrue, S. McConville, Daffer, O. McConville, and Teter. Nays: None. Absent: Potthoff. Motion carried.

Moved by Daffer, seconded by Sughrue, to approve the resignation of Rebecca Brittenham effective at the end of the 2013-2014 school year with appreciation of her service to the district. Ayes: Sughrue, S. McConville, O. McConville, Daffer, and Teter. Nays: None. Absent: Potthoff. Motion carried.

Moved by S. McConville, seconded by Daffer, to approve the option enrollment application of the child of Bobbie Jo Wallace to Southwest Schools. Ayes: Sughrue, S. McConville, O. McConville, Daffer, and Teter. Nays: None. Absent: Potthoff. Motion carried.

Moved by Sughrue, seconded by O. McConville, to approve the option enrollment application of the child of Darren Peters to Southwest Schools. Ayes: Sughrue, S. McConville, O. McConville, Daffer, and Teter. Nays: None. Absent: Potthoff. Motion carried.

Moved by Daffer, seconded by S. McConville, to approve the option enrollment application of the child of Sonja Thompson to Southwest Schools. Ayes: Sughrue, S. McConville, O. McConville, Daffer, and Teter. Nays: None. Absent: Potthoff. Motion carried.

Moved by O. McConville, seconded by S. McConville, to approve the employment of certified staff for the 2014-2015 school year as recommended by Superintendent Todd Porter. Ayes: Sughrue, S. McConville, O. McConville, Daffer, and Teter. Nays: None. Absent: Potthoff. Motion carried.

Moved by Sughrue, seconded by S. McConville, to go into closed session to evaluate the job performance of an employee and protect the needless injury to the employee's reputation at 8:30 p.m. President Teter repeated the motion, and the Board voted. Ayes: S. McConville, Teter, Sughrue, Daffer, and O. McConville. Nays: None. Absent: Potthoff. Motion carried.

President Teter declared the end of closed session at 9:10 p.m.

Superintendent Porter discussed the passage of LB923 and 907, School Law Seminar registration, state aid comparison and budget authority, recent meetings, FFA Grants, and the possibility of one-to-one laptops for the 2014-'15 school year to be placed on the May Board meeting agenda.

Principal Springer discussed coach bus inspections, concession stand bid review, track area updates, tornado drill and emergency evacuations, grade 8-12 student physicals, and offering of a summer Drivers' Education Course.

Principal Baumbach reported on prior and upcoming elementary activities, tornado drills, NeSA testing Pep Rally, Title I review, and Summer School dates.

Moved by Daffer, seconded by S. McConville, to adjourn the meeting at 9:33 p.m. Ayes: Sughrue, S. McConville, Daffer, Teter, and O. McConville. Nays: None. Absent: Potthoff. Motion carried.

Agenda for meetings will be kept continually current and available for public inspection in the office of the Superintendent.

The next regular board meeting will be held on Monday, May 12, 2014, at 7:30 p.m. at the Southwest Junior-Senior High School in Bartley.

Southwest Public Schools

Southwest High School
900 Coke Street
PO Box 187
Bartley, NE 69020
Phone: 308-692-3223
Toll Free: 855-692-3172
Fax: 308-692-3221

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Elementary Field Day - Mr. Kennedy

The elementary field day will be held May 9th in Bartley. Elementary students will eat lunch at the high school at 11:30 and the events will start at 12:15. Each event will last for approximately twenty minutes. There will be concessions available provided by the booster club.

The field day will not only be an opportunity for the community to see all of the improvements to our track facilities, but it will also be a

chance for us to get our elementary students excited for track. When you look around not only southwest Nebraska, but the entire state, you will see that those schools with strong football, volleyball, basketball, and wrestling programs also have strong track programs. This is by no means a coincidence. Sports build off of one another and there is no better way for an athlete to enter the summer break than in top shape.

