

**JANUARY 2012**

**Southwest Schools**

# Rider News

## Annual Report to Patrons

The following information is the annual report to district patrons, as required by the Nebraska Department of Education rules of accreditation. The Nebraska state report card features information on each individual school district in comparison to state and national averages. This report is to give the district patrons information on achievement, school system performance, and district resource allocation and expenditures. This report is to encourage all district patrons to become aware of the challenges and accomplishments of the district. You can access a more detailed report located at the Nebraska Department of Education website at [www.nde.state.ne.us](http://www.nde.state.ne.us).

All public school districts are required to be accredited by the state. Accreditation requirements are found in the Regulations and Procedures for Accreditation of School (Rule 10). To review these requirements, go to <http://www.education.ne.gov>

## Mission Statement

"United We Educate"

Our wish is to develop responsible, life-long learners through a progressive, quality education. This district, in cooperation with family and community, will provide a flexible and varied educational program committed to excellence. Students will become empowered to become productive and contributing members of a global society.

**School Resumes January 3rd!**

**Happy New Year!!**

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### Special Points of Interest

- Jan. 3 - School Resumes
- Jan. 3 - Rescheduled BB game vs. Maywood JV starting at 4:00 pm.
- Jan. 9 - All School Play at 7:00 pm.
- Jan.9 - School Boarding Meeting at 8:00 pm.
- Jan. 16 - RPAC Vocal Clinic at Medicine Valley Concert at 7:00 pm

## DESCRIPTION OF DISTRICT

The Southwest Public School System is a consolidated district that covers approximately 650 square miles of Red Willow, Frontier, and Furnas Counties and includes the rural communities of Wilsonville, Lebanon, Danbury, Marion, Bartley, and Indianola. A highly qualified and dedicated staff works with the 325 students in grades PK-12 of the Southwest Public School District. This staff has designed and implemented curriculum that aligns with the State Standards. The district's student assessment process includes NeSA-R NeSA-W, NeSA-M, and the NWEA/MAPS as a nationally normed referenced test. These assessments provide the staff with information to review and revise the curriculum providing our students with a learning environment that will assist them throughout life. Southwest Public Schools is accredited by the Nebraska Department of Education.

Staff development opportunities strengthen the teaching and learning process and we have a well maintained facility which add to the positive learning environment. There is a strong level of support from parents and the community.

## AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE AND MEMBERSHIP

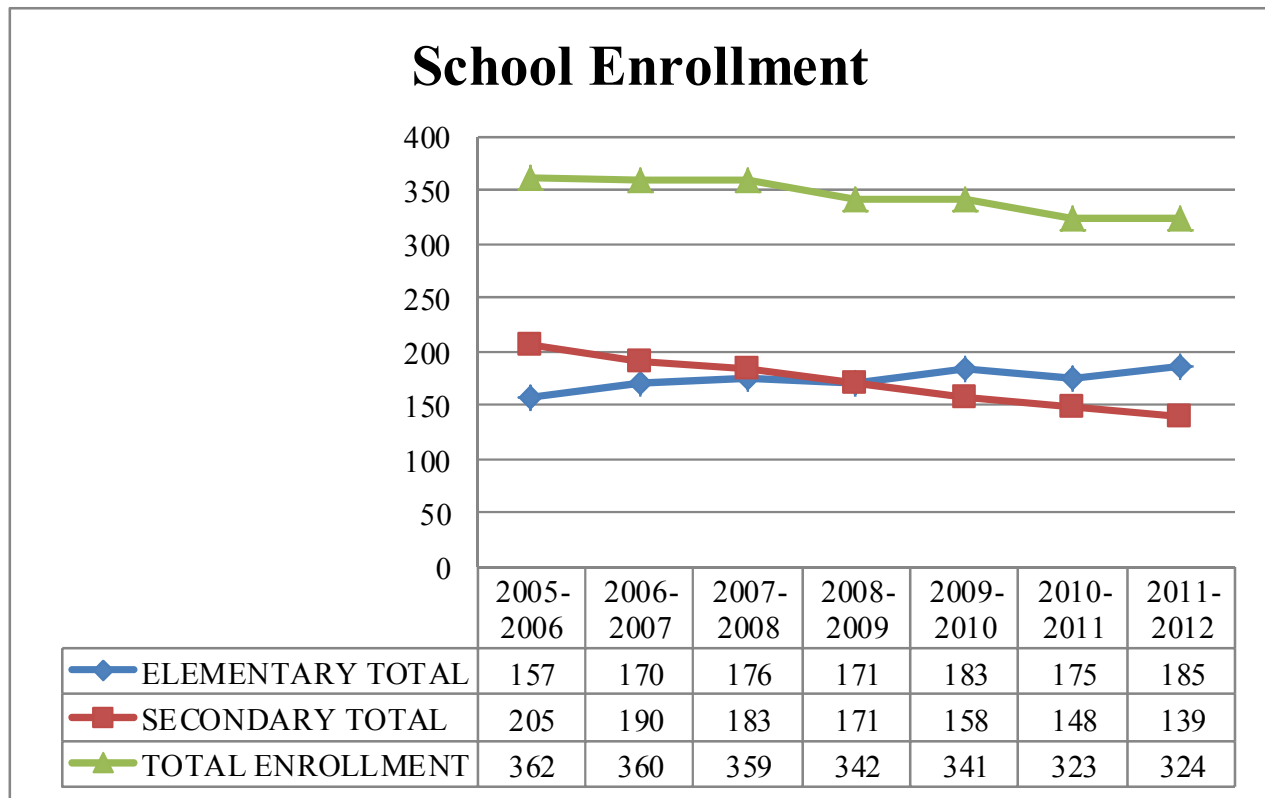
The following table represents the number of students enrolled in the given grade levels during the 2010-2011 school year.

Grade	Average Daily Attendance	Average Daily Membership
Preschool	18.90	20.02
Kindergarten	19.53	20.62
Grade 1	18.51	19.41
Grade 2	17.66	18.30
Grade 3	20.21	21.03
Grade 4	28.61	29.55
Grade 5	25.79	27.65
Grade 6	19.76	20.62
Grade 7	22.46	24.07
Grade 8	14.43	15.06
Grade 9	27.60	29.03
Grade 10	20.42	21.53
Grade 11	28.32	30.07
Grade 12	24.96	26.75

The average daily attendance is calculated by dividing the aggregate days attendance (those students who actually attended) by the number of days in session. The average daily membership is calculated by dividing the aggregate daily membership (those students enrolled, whether they attend or not) by the total number of days in session.

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

The charts and data below show a historical enrollment summary.



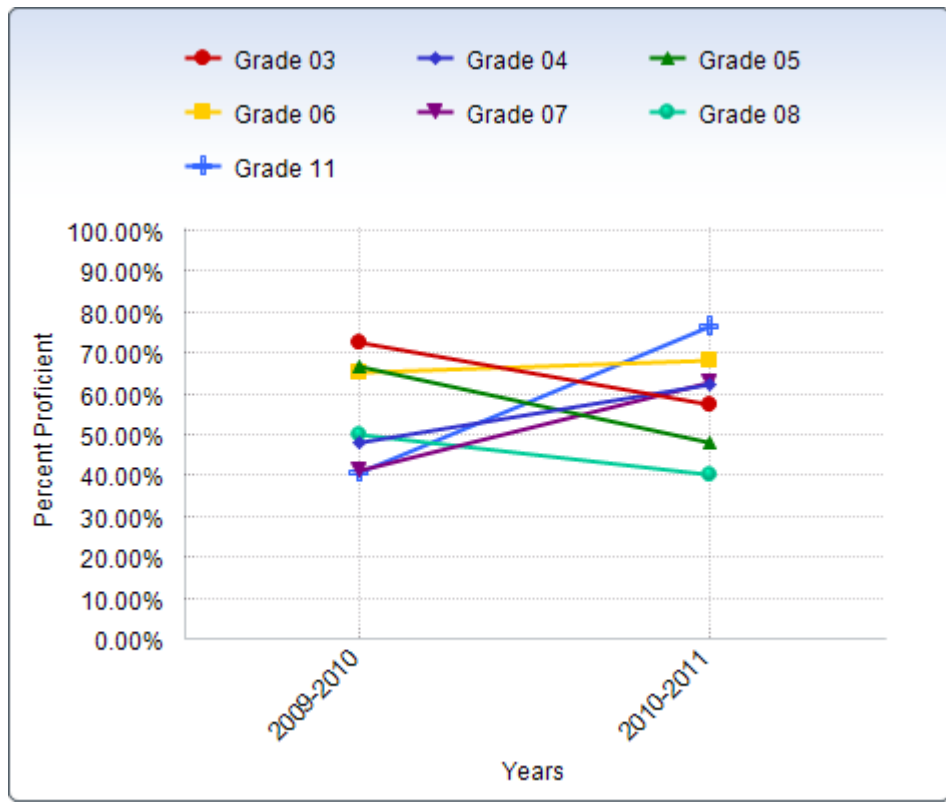
The table below shows PK-12 Enrollment by grade level for the last six years including the current year.

Grade	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Pre-K		19	17	20	20	21	20
K	22	20	22	18	22	20	26
1	17	23	24	21	20	19	23
2	23	19	28	26	22	18	18
3	14	20	19	29	28	21	18
4	26	15	23	19	27	29	23
5	27	30	15	22	21	27	30
6	28	24	28	16	23	20	27
7	33	31	21	29	17	24	22
8	34	30	28	25	30	15	25
9	35	31	30	32	25	29	14
10	41	32	32	29	30	22	27
11	29	42	34	27	27	31	21
12	33	24	38	29	29	27	30
ELEMENTARY	157	170	176	171	183	175	185
SECONDARY	205	190	183	171	158	148	139
TOTAL	362	360	359	342	341	323	324

**STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

**Nebraska State Accountability (NeSA-Reading)**

**Assessment of State Reading Standards - All Students**

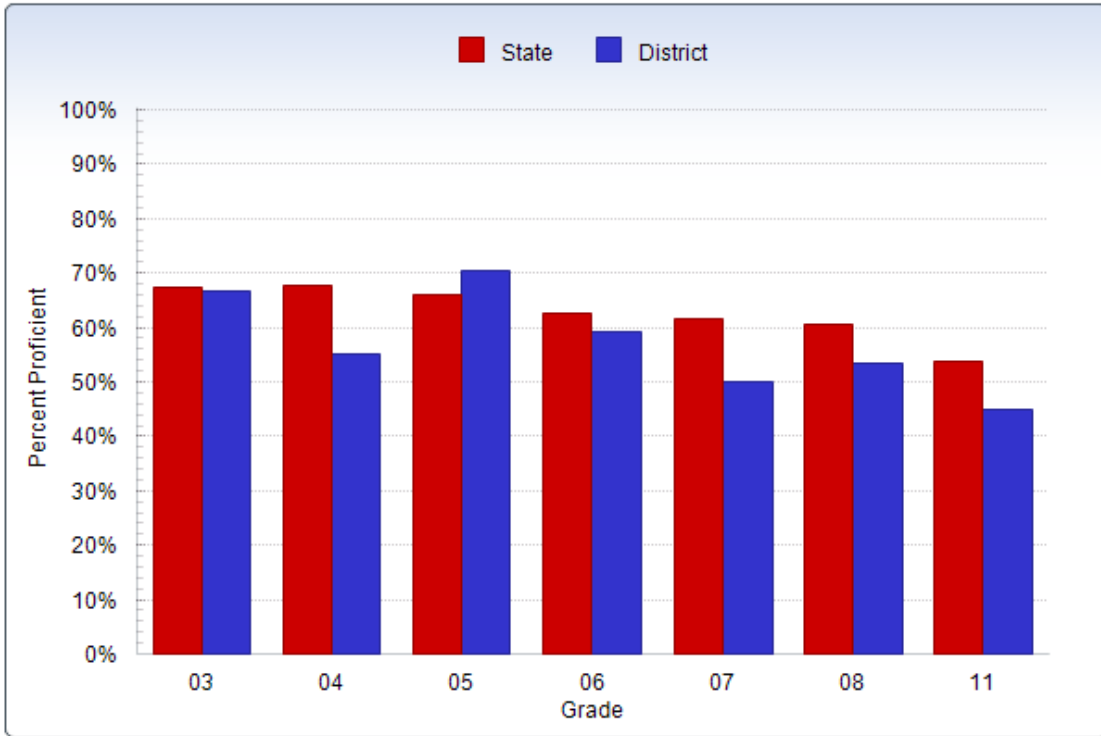


District Average Reading Scale Scores: Scale Score Range 0-200				
	2009-2010		2010-2011	
	State	District	State	District
Grade 3	101	105	104	96
Grade 4	104	84	109	93
Grade 5	101	98	108	88
Grade 6	101	97	109	100
Grade 7	104	77	110	92
Grade 8	102	85	106	81
Grade 11	101	81	102	100

- NeSA-R statewide tests in grades 3-8 and 11 were administered for the second time in Spring 2010. The tests measured the newly revised Nebraska reading standards and determined whether Nebraska students are proficient on standards.

**Nebraska State Accountability (NeSA-Math)**  
**Assessment of State Math Standards - All Students**

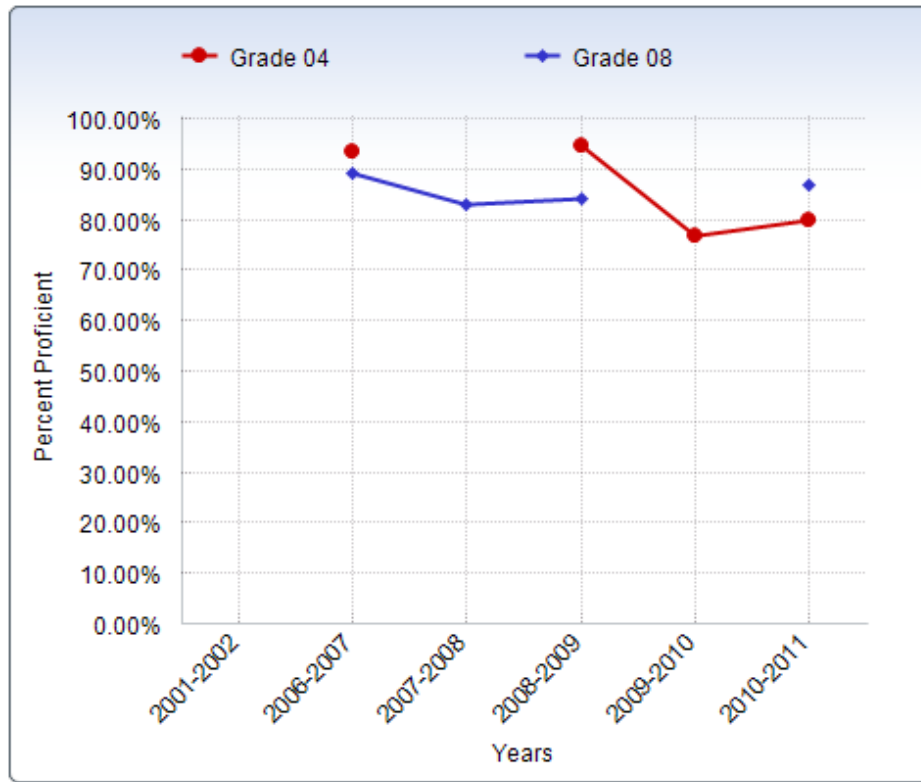
**Percent Proficient By Grade**



District Average Mathematics Scale Scores: Scale Score Range 0-200		
	2010-2011	
	State	District
Grade 3	103	100
Grade 4	103	94
Grade 5	103	99
Grade 6	100	100
Grade 7	99	88
Grade 8	98	85
Grade 11	95	83

- NeSA-M statewide tests in grades 3-8 and 11 were administered for the first time in Spring 2010. The tests measured the newly revised Nebraska math standards and determined whether Nebraska students are proficient on standards.

### Assessment of State Writing Standards - All Students (NeSA-W)



Overall Performance Percentages for All Students Meeting or Exceeding Standards		
Years	Grade 04	Grade 08
2001-2002	N/A	N/A
2006-2007	93.33%	89.29%
*2007-2008	*	82.76%
2008-2009	94.74%	84.00%
2009-2010	76.92%	*
2010-2011	80.00%	86.67%
% of Change	↓13.33%	↓2.62%

The percentage of change compares the latest year of assessments to the first year the assessments were given for that grade.

N/A - Standards were assessed at a different grade level during that year.

\* Data has been masked to protect the identity of students using one the following criteria:

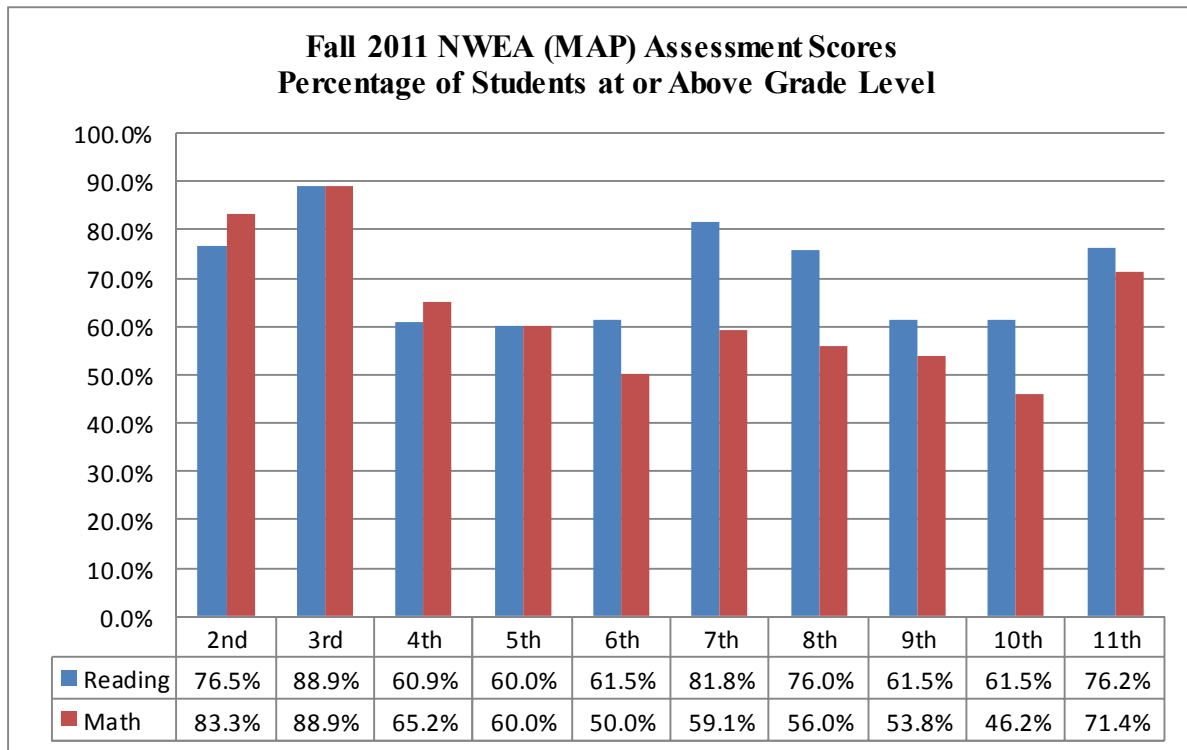
- 1) Fewer than 10 students were reported in a grade or standard.
- 2) All students were reported in a single performance category.

**STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT—NORM REFERENCED (NWEA/MAP)**

**Reading and Math - Normal Curve Equivalent Scores**

Northwest Evaluation Association - Normal Curve Equivalent Score (NCE 1-99)						
Grade	District			State		
	Average Normal Curve Total Score (NCE Range: 1-99)	Reading	Math	Average Normal Curve Total Score (NCE Range: 1-99)	Reading	Math
<a href="#">4th Grade</a>	N/A	48	51	N/A	57	55
<a href="#">8th Grade</a>	N/A	49	54	N/A	57	58
<a href="#">11th Grade</a>	N/A	58	60	N/A	56	57

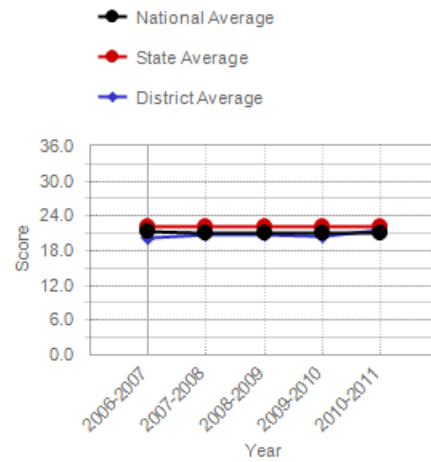
N / A: Not Available



## 2010-2011 ACT RESULTS

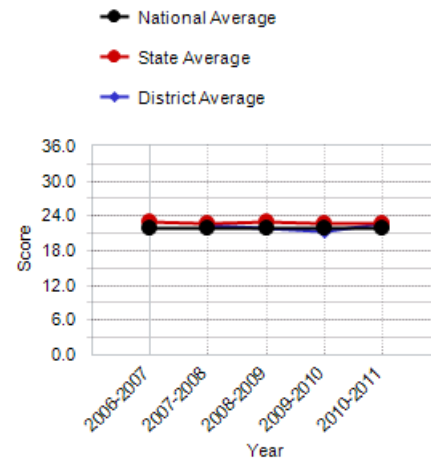
All national and Nebraska high school graduates participating in the ACT for the years are shown.

ACT Composite Score			
Years	National Average	State Average	District Average
2006-2007	21.20	22.10	20.30
2007-2008	21.10	22.10	20.70
2008-2009	21.10	22.10	20.80
2009-2010	21.00	22.10	20.40
2010-2011	21.10	22.10	21.60

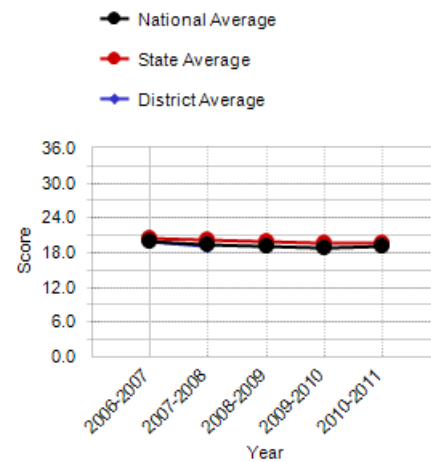


Students who took the core courses have completed at least four years of English and three years of mathematics, social studies, and natural sciences.

Average Score of Students Who Took Core Courses or More			
Years	National Average	State Average	District Average
2006-2007	22.00	22.90	*
2007-2008	22.00	22.80	22.30
2008-2009	22.00	22.90	21.80
2009-2010	22.00	22.80	21.40
2010-2011	21.90	22.70	22.80



Average Score of Students Who Took Less Than Core Courses			
Years	National Average	State Average	District Average
2006-2007	19.80	20.40	19.90
2007-2008	19.50	20.10	19.20
2008-2009	19.10	19.80	*
2009-2010	18.90	19.60	*
2010-2011	19.00	19.60	*



**STAFF**

The district's administration includes a superintendent, high school principal, and an elementary principal. Administrators have advanced degrees, which range from a master's degree to a specialists degree. A principal contract consist of 10 months for the elementary and 10.5 months for the high school and the superintendent contract is for 12 months of service.

The district employs 34.50 certified teachers for the 2011-2012 school year, including a part-time elementary guidance counselor, 7-12 guidance counselor, part-time school nurse, and a K-12 media specialist. Eleven teachers have at least a master's degree. The standard teaching contract consists of 183 days of service. The average teacher salary for 2011-2012 is \$43,385 excluding benefits and extra duty. The average years of experience for the district was 18.94 years for 2010-2011.

Average Years of Teaching Experience		
Years	State	District
2000-2001	16.03	
2005-2006	15.62	17.32
2007-2008	15.30	16.50
2008-2009	15.19	16.66
2009-2010	15.26	17.37
2010-2011	15.24	18.94

Average Teacher Salary		
Years	State	District
2000-2001	\$34,258	
2005-2006	\$40,382	\$36,803
2007-2008	\$43,629	\$39,937
2008-2009	\$44,968	\$39,505
2009-2010	\$46,227	\$40,921
2010-2011	\$47,402	\$42,837

Teachers Count and Teachers with Master's Degree						
Years	Total Teacher Count		Total Teachers with Master's Degrees		Percentage of Teachers with Master's Degrees	
	State	District	State	District	State	District
2000-2001	20,479.84		11,010.00		43.59%	
2005-2006	23,586.92	39.12	9,610.00	14.00	39.08%	31.82%
2007-2008	24,193.13	39.87	10,242.00	10.00	40.80%	23.81%
2008-2009	24,331.56	34.12	10,712.00	7.00	42.41%	20.00%
2009-2010	24,467.68	33.62	11,207.00	9.00	44.10%	25.71%
2010-2011	24,633.92	30.49	11,692.00	9.00	45.72%	29.03%

The district employs twenty-eight classified staff members:

Maintenance/custodial (four full-time)

Transportation (seven part-time, seven part-time activity and substitute drivers)

Kitchen (six full-time)

Office (three full-time)

Paraprofessionals (seven full-time and two part-time)

**FINANCE**

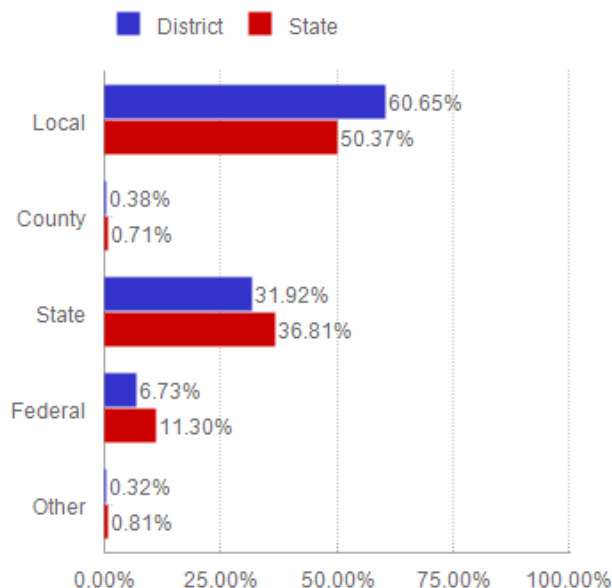
The annual budget of the school district supports the ability to provide a quality education to our students. The total budget of disbursements and transfers approved for 2011-2012 is \$9,190,920. Revenue is received from federal, state, and local sources. The total local property tax for 2011-2012 is \$4,294,544. The total 2011-2012 tax levy is \$1.185637 per \$100 assessed property value. This is a slight decrease from the 2010-2011 school year.

Year	Frontier County	Furnas County	Red Willow County	Total Valuation
2003-2004	\$28,148,673	\$24,492,608	\$170,098,863	\$222,740,144
2004-2005	\$27,581,740	\$25,693,375	\$170,318,910	\$223,594,025
2005-2006	\$28,946,128	\$27,227,076	\$181,563,523	\$237,736,727
2006-2007	\$29,235,215	\$27,474,699	\$192,738,795	\$249,448,709
2007-2008	\$30,078,100	\$27,878,811	\$199,061,048	\$257,017,959
2008-2009	\$31,627,763	\$28,259,493	\$218,240,540	\$278,127,796
2009-2010	\$35,322,487	\$33,633,676	\$227,493,237	\$296,449,400
2010-2011	\$39,344,810	\$37,879,253	\$244,285,130	\$321,509,193
2011-2012	\$40,877,270	\$45,463,462	\$275,873,504	\$362,214,236

Receipts for 2009-2010 (as reported by the Nebraska State Report Card)

2009-2010 Receipts		
	Receipts	Percent
Local	<u>\$2,992,450.00</u>	60.65%
County	<u>\$18,752.00</u>	0.38%
State	<u>\$1,574,857.00</u>	31.92%
Federal	<u>\$331,797.00</u>	6.73%
Other	<u>\$15,724.00</u>	0.32%

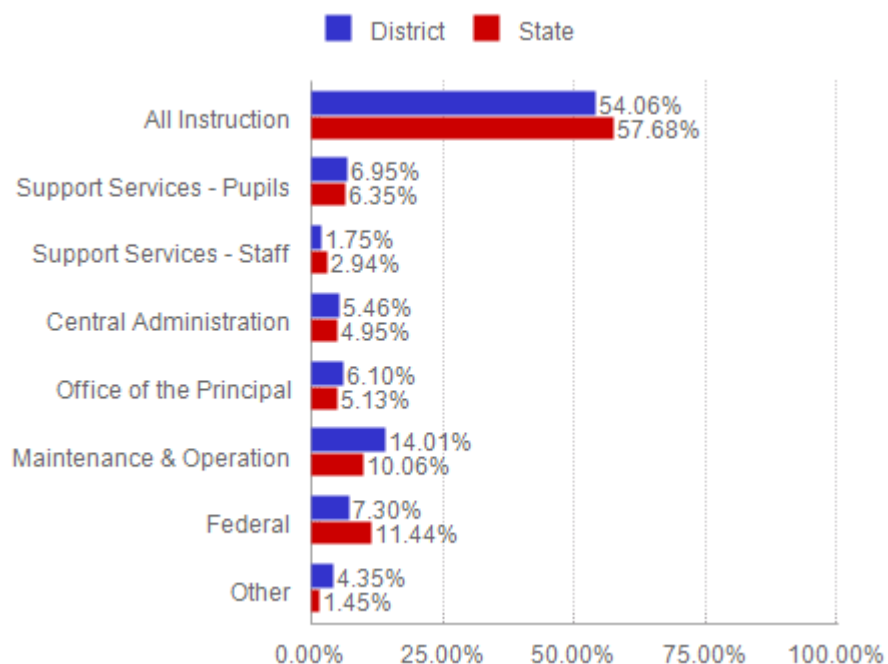
Receipts State and District Comparison for 2009-2010



2009-2010 Comparison		
	State Average	District
Local	50.37%	60.65%
County	0.71%	0.38%
State	36.81%	31.92%
Federal	11.30%	6.73%
Other	0.81%	0.32%

Expenditures for 2009-2010 (as reported by the Nebraska State Report Card)

2009-2010 Expenditures		
	Expenditures	Percent
All Instruction	\$2,362,930.00	54.06%
Support Services - Pupils	\$303,732.00	6.95%
Support Services - Staff	\$76,631.00	1.75%
Central Administration	\$238,744.00	5.46%
Office of the Principal	\$266,699.00	6.10%
Maintenance & Operation	\$612,334.00	14.01%
Federal	\$319,249.00	7.30%
Other	\$190,333.00	4.35%



2009-2010 Comparison		
	State Average	District
All Instruction	57.68%	54.06%
Support Services - Pupils	6.35%	6.95%
Support Services - Staff	2.94%	1.75%
Central Administration	4.95%	5.46%
Office of the Principal	5.13%	6.10%
Maintenance & Operation	10.06%	14.01%
Federal	11.44%	7.30%
Other	1.45%	4.35%

## School Board Minutes

Board of Education Meeting  
Southwest Public Schools  
District 179  
December 12, 2011

Vice-President Crinda McConville called the regular meeting of the Southwest Public Schools Board of Education to order at 7:31 p.m. on December 12, 2011 at the Southwest Elementary School in Indianola.

Present: Tom Sughroue, Kevin Potthoff, Crinda McConville, Steve McConville, Steve Daffer, Principals Carrie Rasmussen and Matt Springer, Superintendent Clayton Waddle, and Patricia Smith.

Absent: Duane Teter.

Visitors: Mary Marsh, Cody Gerlach, Linda Clark, Bernard Walz, and Don and Donna Behnke.

Vice-President McConville observed Open Meeting Law requirements.

Moved by Sughroue, seconded by S. McConville, to excuse absent Board Member Duane Teter. Ayes: Potthoff, C. McConville, Sughroue, Daffer, and S. McConville. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by S. McConville, seconded by Daffer, to approve the board meeting agenda as presented. Ayes: Daffer, Sughroue, Potthoff, C. McConville, and S. McConville. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. 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 the president of the board and all members prior to the meeting date.

Moved by Sughroue, seconded by Daffer, to approve the November 14, 2011 board meeting minutes as presented. Ayes: Sughroue, Potthoff, C. McConville, Daffer, and S. McConville. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

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

Superintendent Waddle presented the treasurer's report to the Board.

Moved by Sughroue, seconded by S. McConville, to accept the 2010-2011 financial audit report submitted by Eugene Ulmer. Ayes: Daffer, S. McConville, C. McConville, Sughroue, and Potthoff. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by S. McConville, seconded by Sughroue, to approve the enrollment option applications for the child of Sandi Henry. Ayes: S. McConville, Sughroue, C. McConville, Potthoff, and Daffer. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by Daffer, seconded by S. McConville, to approve the enrollment option applications for the children of Susanne Shald. Ayes: S. McConville, Sughroue, C. McConville, Potthoff, and Daffer. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

## Board Minutes Continued...

Moved by Sughroue, seconded by Daffer, to approve the enrollment option applications for the children of Stacey Armijo. Ayes: S. McConville, Sughroue, C. McConville, Potthoff, and Daffer. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by S. McConville, seconded by Potthoff, to approve the enrollment option applications for the child of Donald Ruggles. Ayes: S. McConville, Sughroue, C. McConville, Potthoff, and Daffer. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by S. McConville, seconded by Sughroue, to approve the purchase of a 2010 65 passenger Blue Bird bus and a 2013 65 passenger Blue Bird bus from Nebraska/Central Equipment, Inc. in the amount of \$141,068.00. Ayes: S. McConville, Sughroue, C. McConville, and Potthoff. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by Sughroue, seconded by Daffer, to approve a contract with Egan Supply Company in the amount of \$7,381.50 to refinish the district's gym floors in the Summer of 2012. Ayes: S. McConville, Sughroue, C. McConville, Potthoff, and Daffer. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by S. McConville, seconded by Sughroue, to approve the use of the Retirement Incentive Program as presented for two participants for the 2011-2012 school year and zero participants for the 2012-213 school year. Ayes: Daffer, S. McConville, and Sughroue. Nays: Potthoff and C. McConville. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Superintendent Waddle and Steve McConville attended the Village of Bartley Board Meeting on Tuesday, December 6, and reported to the Board that a joint meeting would be scheduled to discuss the junior-senior high building's electrical rate plan. Superintendent Waddle discussed the settlement of the refunding bonds on December 15, the school attorney's review of the district's retirement incentive program document, and the possibility of holding a half-day teacher inservice on January 2 and another half-day inservice later in the second semester.

Principal Springer reported on the new approach and timetable for the first semester tests, the Board-Staff Christmas Social, and the volunteer assistant boys' basketball coach, Jack Ryan.

Principal Rasmussen reported on the fourth grade recycling field trip and the kindergarten's virtual field trip of the Henry Doorley Zoo, the Elementary Principal's Conference, the elementary music program, and the McCook Rotary Club's donation of picture dictionaries to the third grade students of Red Willow County.

Moved by Sughroue, seconded by S. McConville, to enter into closed session at 9:00 p.m. to discuss pending litigation for the protection of public interest. Vice-President McConville repeated the motion, and the board voted as follows: Ayes: Daffer, C. McConville, Sughroue, S. McConville, and Potthoff. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. Motion carried.

Vice-President McConville reconvened open session at 9:06 p.m.

Moved by Potthoff, seconded by C. McConville, to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 p.m. Ayes: Daffer, C. McConville, Sughroue, S. McConville, and Potthoff. Nays: None. Absent: Teter. 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, January 9, 2012, at 8:00 p.m. at the Southwest Junior-Senior High School in Bartley.

## High School News - Mr. Springer

The first semester has past and students grades are recorded. As we get geared up for another round we are looking at some new faces in the student body. We have had a large number of students moving into the district or families optioning there students to our school for second semester. That is a positive sign and good to see as our enrollment increases. Parents are always calling and wanting to check out our school and the educational classes we offer.

We now have officially tried a new set up for semester test so I will be anxious to poll the students and staff to see what they liked and disliked with the new test method.

We will look at those responses and decide how we will conclude the second semester finals. Change is always scary the first time but usually in the end it works out and every ones fears are forgotten. If you as parents have questions or concern for the way the test were given last semester please don't hesitate to call.

Scholarships are starting to filter into the office and Mr. Watt has a huge roll when it comes to getting info to the kids. I hope as a parent you can sit down and discuss your child's plans after high school. It may not seem like an important thing to do if your student is not a senior, however in the colleges today there are programs that have a

waiting list to even get accepted. So, it is important to turn in an application prior to the senior year. ACT scores are becoming a huge part of getting accepted and they also hold a lot of weight in local and federal scholarships. Taking the test more than one time has proven in almost every case that the student will improve the second and even the third time. One point on the test can mean the difference of a few dollars or a full tuition scholarship. The \$34.00 fee to take the test is cheap if they improve on their score. Students are encouraged to take the ACT test twice their Junior year and again twice the fall of their senior year.

## Science for 2012 - Mrs. Frecks

What a great time of the year! It's a time for students to get a fresh new start. At the beginning of the new semester, we welcomed 2 new students, Caleb and Caitlyn, to our homeroom. Erik started school with us shortly before Christmas, so now we are a group of 17.

Teachers are back and enthusiastic about the workshop we all attended just before Christmas break. We are looking forward to reintroducing some skills into the classroom which will help all of us to become more successful.

The second semester will progress rapidly so it is time to focus in and prepare for the State Testing which will take place in the spring.

For the first time this year, 5<sup>th</sup> graders will be taking a state Science test. Science has been added to the State Reading and Math tests for 2012.

We have completed the Life Science unit and will be working on physical and earth science the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester. Students have completed a project and will complete others throughout the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester.

Developing an inquiring mind and using it as we apply the Scientific Method has been challenging but we are making progress. Along with learning science facts about the physical world we live in, students are expected to learn to "think like a scientist" each day. This involves understanding rela-

tionships between product (facts/concepts) and process. Some process skills include observing, classifying, inferring, predicting, experimenting, etc. As you plan and complete projects at home, let your students help you. You can help your child/grandchild by asking some questions and helping your student learn to "think like a scientist" as they complete tasks. One of the most helpful things that you can do, is talk to your child about the world we live in and how we can make it a better place. Science can be challenging but it can also be fun.

It's time for all of us to resolve to make 2012 the best year ever!

## SW FFA- Stayin' Busy - Mr. Roggenkamp

The Southwest FFA Chapter has had an active first semester of the school year. FFA members have had the chance to attend the Nebraska State Fair, Husker Harvest Days, and the McCook Farm Expo. FFA members have also attended a leadership conference called IMPACT, and compete in Land Judging, Natural Resources, Agricultural Communication, Livestock Judging, and Par Law contests.

The chapter was able to be involved in both the Bartley Town Celebration and the Old Settlers Celebration this year. Members have helped operate games in the park, have floats in both parades, and serve a meal before the melo-

drama. Members participated in the fair activities and had several members be rodeo clowns for the muttin' bustin' activities. The chapter has also held a school wide coat drive, and toy drive, with all donations being dropped off locally. The chapter also participated in a food drive for Husker Harvest Days.

The chapter is currently 3<sup>rd</sup> in the state of Nebraska in donations contributed to the "I Believe" program being advertised across the state as fund drive for the Nebraska FFA Foundation. Southwest FFA will receive a \$1000 grant from the foundation to purchase and put up and "grow house" for

the plant science class from the Foundation. In connection with this grant, the chapter will be awarded a "Governor's Excellence" award at State FFA Convention.

The FFA chapter has many activities this next semester and would like to thank everyone who purchased fruits and meats from the chapter or purchased meals during one the chapters meals served at ballgames. Delivery of all items should of taken place prior to Christmas, and funds will be used to assist the chapter in expenses for overnight stays and fees for contests and registration to the State FFA Convention in late March.

## Elementary News - Mrs. Rasmussen

Welcome to the New Year! January is a month for New Year's Resolutions. This article will give you a few ideas for resolutions that will increase your child's success in school.

Resolve to have your child to school on time each morning. Students who come to school on time hear morning announcements and know what to expect over the course of the day. They are prepared for any changes that come their way.

Resolve to have as close to perfect attendance as possible. While we understand that children get sick on occasion, their regular attend-

ance is important. Classroom experiences cannot be duplicated. Children who attend regularly are able to keep up with their classwork and score higher on assignments.

Other ideas for resolutions are to check with your child to make sure their homework is complete. Set time aside to read to your younger children or listen to your older child. Check backpacks for notes and stay informed by reading the newsletter or checking the school web site. Encourage your child to do their very best on tests as well as daily work. Finally, please come for a visit, call and ask questions anytime the need arises. If their

education is important to you it will be important to them.

I hope everyone had a restful break. The staff and I are happy to have your students back and look forward to a successful second semester. If the second semester goes as fast as the first, the end of the school year will be here before we know it.





## Life Skills News - Mrs. Wyatt

The Life Skills class has been busy during 1<sup>st</sup> semester. We have been learning to clean the Life Skills building. The students do a very good job and take a lot of pride in our building. We have also been cooking quite a bit. Our first meal was Nifla Soup, a popular soup in North Dakota. After our research, we discovered that it was first made in Germany. It was a hit with all the students. We have also made pizza. Each student had their own individuality while making

their pizza. Everyone's pizza tasted great. We just finished having chicken and noodles with mashed potatoes, corn, crescent rolls, and red velvet cake dessert to top off our meal. Mashing potatoes the old fashioned way wasn't a very big hit so we put the potato masher up and used the mixer. They thought that way was a lot easier. These students are doing very well learning skills in the kitchen. They even did a nice job cutting up the chicken.

Students are also in charge of answering the phone in our building. Their communication skills are improving.

If you are at school, please feel free to stop in and see our Life Skills building. We have had several visitors. The students are in charge of giving tours and telling about our program. We will look forward to seeing you.

## HS Counselor Updates - Mr. Watt

JUNIORS will be going through the John Baylor ACT Test Prep Course in January and early February through Mr. Loshbaugh's English 11 classes in preparation for the February and April ACT test dates. Parents and guardians there is more information available at [www.JohnBaylorTestPrep.com](http://www.JohnBaylorTestPrep.com).

For more information about registering and paying for the ACT test please visit [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org).

All college bound juniors should look at taking the ACT test 3-4 times to maximize scholarship op-

portunities. The John Baylor ACT test prep course is designed to raise school-wide ACT averages by up to two points. Parents and students are encouraged to make the most of these opportunities.

SENIORS it is that time of year to starting working on getting tax returns completed in order to complete your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA is where students and parents receive the grants and loans that they may qualify for. For more information please visit

[www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov) or  
[www.studentaid.ed.gov/guide](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov/guide).

FAFSA estimators are available now at [www.educationquest.org](http://www.educationquest.org).

Local scholarship season will soon be upon us beginning in January. Students and parents are encouraged to check the daily announcements at [www.swpschools.org](http://www.swpschools.org). Scholarship availability and deadline information will be updated weekly. Scholarship applications will also be delivered to students throughout the day.

## HELP WANTED

We need judges and workers for two speech meets!  
February 11th at Southwest High School 9:00 am  
February 25th at McCook Community College 9:00 am  
Please call the High School Office (692-3223) or email  
[lclark@esu15.org](mailto:lclark@esu15.org) if you can help!!

# 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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**Southwest High School Presents  
An Evening of One Acts  
"The True Story of Cinderella"  
"Not-So-Grimm Tales"  
January 9th, 2012 7:00 pm  
High School Auditorium  
Admission: Food Items for Pantry**

## Book Of The Month - Mrs. Young

The book of the month is "The Big Snow" by Berta and Elmer Hader. It was awarded the Caldecott Medal in 1949.

The woodland animals were all getting ready for the winter. Geese flew south, rabbits and deer grew thick warm coats, and the raccoons and chipmunk lay down for a long winter nap. Come

Christmas time, the wise owls were the first to see the rainbow around the moon. It is a sure sign that a big snow is on its way.

The animals that do not hibernate and rely on getting food from the ground are suddenly hungry. How will they survive? Check out the book from the library and you will know what happens.

