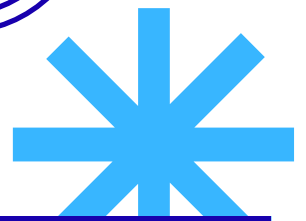


# 'Rider News



## May 2026

### Mr. Billeter, Superintendent

As we head toward the end of the school year, I want to take a moment to thank everyone for your support, help, and involvement throughout the year. It truly takes a village—or in our case, six communities working together—to make everything run smoothly, and we are very grateful for the strong support from our families and community.

I would like to share a few important updates as we finish the year. The last day of school has been moved up from Wednesday, May 20 to Tuesday, May 19 at 1:00 PM. Students in grades 6-12 who met the semester test incentive standards will have their last day on Friday, May 15. Please continue to check the school calendar for all upcoming activities and events, as this is a very busy and exciting time of year.

We also encourage everyone to stay connected by following Southwest Public Schools on Facebook and X. Our staff does a great job sharing the many positive things happening across our district and highlighting the great work and accomplishments of our students. It is a great way to stay informed and celebrate all that is going on at Southwest.

As we approach the end of the year, please make sure to check Infinite Campus for updates on your student's lunch balances, attendance, and grades. Did you know that you can now pay lunch balances online through Infinite Campus? This feature allows families to make payments quickly and conveniently. We also accept debit and credit card payments at each school office. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact your building secretary. In addition, as the school year comes to a close, please take care of any outstanding balances such as lunch accounts, library fines, or other school-related fees.

Graduation is quickly approaching, and we are excited to celebrate the Class of 2026. At this time, all seniors are on track and have met the requirements for graduation. The graduation ceremony will be held on Saturday, May 9 at 10:30 AM in the high school gym. We would love to see everyone there to celebrate this major accomplishment and support our seniors as they reach this important milestone.

I would also like to wish all of our students involved in spring sports and activities the best of luck as they begin conference and district competitions. We are proud of their hard work, effort, and dedication, and we look forward to cheering them on as they finish their seasons strong.

As we wrap up the school year, I want to again thank our teachers, paraprofessionals, office staff, bus drivers, cooks, custodians, and school board members for everything they do each and every day. It takes all of us working together to fulfill our mission of providing educational opportunities for all students, and I am proud of what we have accomplished this year. Our students have been given many great opportunities both in the classroom and through activities, and that is something worth celebrating.

Thank you for your continued support of Southwest Public Schools, and we look forward to finishing the year strong.  
#RollRiders

Mrs. Fries, Principal

As the 2025-2026 school year comes to an end, the word that best describes my feelings is gratitude. I am incredibly grateful for our dedicated staff, supportive administration, and committed school board. Each of these groups consistently puts students first and works tirelessly to ensure they learn, grow, and thrive. I am also thankful for our families, whose partnership and encouragement make a meaningful difference in our schools every day. Most importantly, we are truly fortunate to work with such amazing students who bring energy, curiosity, and joy into our classrooms. Our community's ongoing support continues to enrich the educational experiences we are able to provide, and for that, we are deeply appreciative.

May 4th-8th is Teacher Appreciation Week, and May 8th is also School Nurse Appreciation Day. If you have the opportunity, please consider taking a moment to write your child's teacher or school nurse a note of appreciation. Teachers play an essential role in shaping both the minds and hearts of our future generation, building foundational skills while fostering empathy, responsibility, and critical thinking. Our school nurses are equally vital, caring for students' health and well-being each day and ensuring they are safe, supported, and ready to learn. We are incredibly fortunate to have such talented and caring professionals in our schools.

Elementary Field Day will be held on Thursday, May 14th at the high school track in Bartley. Students will travel by bus and enjoy a picnic lunch before participating in the day's events, which will begin at 12:10 p.m. Parents, families, and friends are welcome to attend and cheer on our students. The Southwest Foundation will be selling sandwiches and concessions for spectators.

As we wrap up the school year, we look forward to several exciting opportunities and important milestones. Students will participate in a variety of field trips that extend learning beyond the classroom and create lasting memories. We are also planning a fun water day to celebrate students' positive behavior and efforts throughout the semester. In addition, students in grades 3-5 will complete their NSCAS assessments, while students in grades K-2 will finish their MAP Growth assessments. These experiences help us celebrate growth, reflect on progress, and finish the year strong. Thank you for your continued support in making this a successful and rewarding school year for all.



*enjoy* :  
**SUMMER**  
*vacation*

Payton Schake,  
Counselor's Corner

Click the Google link.

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1tUvMVTpzKq3umttYJmzwmBM64aNEs60AOFPMJARU\\_jQ/edi t?gid=0#gid=0](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1tUvMVTpzKq3umttYJmzwmBM64aNEs60AOFPMJARU_jQ/edi t?gid=0#gid=0)

\*The spreadsheet is organized by monthly due dates, so be sure to look at the months in advance, so you have time to fill out the applications before the due date. This is updated as I receive scholarships throughout the year.

\*The scholarships highlighted in red are not updated, and the scholarships highlighted in green are always open and have differing due dates, so be sure to look back on these frequently

### **FAFSA:**

Reminder to ALL seniors, as of this year the State of Nebraska requires the FAFSA to be completed before you graduate (it is a graduation requirement). If you plan on not attending college or do not plan on using student loans to pay for college you **MUST** fill out an exemption form before graduation. These forms are found in Mr. Schake's office.

### **College**

\*If you plan to live in the dorms make sure you pay your housing deposit.

\*If you are attending college make sure you sign up for registration day through your college website.

### **ACT**

Register for the ACT at: [actstudent.org](http://actstudent.org)

Southwest School Code: 280151

MCC Test Site Code: 024600 (paper test only)

<b>Test Dates</b>	<b>Registration Dates</b>	<b>(Late Fee Registration)</b>
June 13, 2026	May 9	May 29
July 11, 2026	June 5	June 24

### **ACT Costs**

**ACT Test:** \$68.00

**Writing Section Add-on:** \$25.00

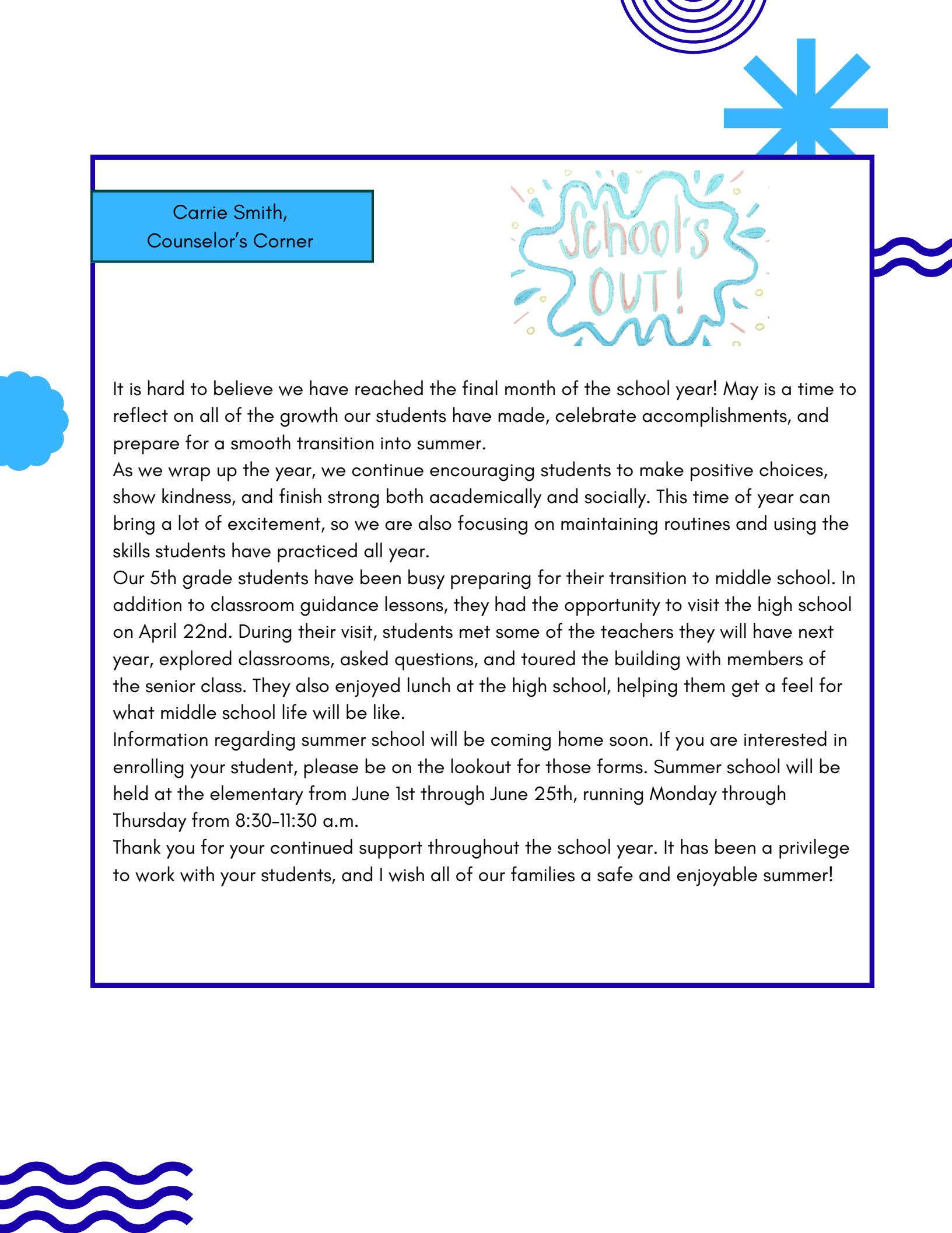
**Science Section Add-on:** \$4.00

### **Juniors**

\*Consider taking the ACT this summer-the higher you score the more opportunity for academic scholarships

\*Those of you taking dual credit courses next Fall make sure to get your payments to the college

\*Start working on your resume, get involved and volunteer. It looks good on applications for college and scholarships



Carrie Smith,  
Counselor's Corner



It is hard to believe we have reached the final month of the school year! May is a time to reflect on all of the growth our students have made, celebrate accomplishments, and prepare for a smooth transition into summer.

As we wrap up the year, we continue encouraging students to make positive choices, show kindness, and finish strong both academically and socially. This time of year can bring a lot of excitement, so we are also focusing on maintaining routines and using the skills students have practiced all year.

Our 5th grade students have been busy preparing for their transition to middle school. In addition to classroom guidance lessons, they had the opportunity to visit the high school on April 22nd. During their visit, students met some of the teachers they will have next year, explored classrooms, asked questions, and toured the building with members of the senior class. They also enjoyed lunch at the high school, helping them get a feel for what middle school life will be like.

Information regarding summer school will be coming home soon. If you are interested in enrolling your student, please be on the lookout for those forms. Summer school will be held at the elementary from June 1st through June 25th, running Monday through Thursday from 8:30-11:30 a.m.

Thank you for your continued support throughout the school year. It has been a privilege to work with your students, and I wish all of our families a safe and enjoyable summer!

**Board of Education Meeting  
Southwest Public Schools  
District 179  
April 13, 2026**

**President Jason Neseth called the regular meeting of the Southwest Public Schools Board of Education to order at 7:30 p.m. on April 13, 2026, at the Southwest Junior-Senior High School in Bartley.**

**Present: Jennifer McConville, John O’Dea, Derek Meyers, Jason Neseth, Brooke Brooks, Duane Teter, Superintendent Drew Billeter and Krista Kennedy.**

**Absent: None.**

**Visitors: Cris Charley, Sagan Downer, Rudy Kennedy, Alyssa Koch, Gage Hammond, Brody Hammond, and Mel Bjork-Cooper.**

**President Neseth observed Open Meeting Law requirements.**

**Moved by Teter, seconded by Meyers, to approve the board meeting agenda as presented. Ayes: Meyers, McConville, Neseth, Teter, O’Dea, and Brooks. Nays: None. Motion carried.**

**Notices of the meeting were posted at the Adams Bank and Trust in Indianola, the Stockmen’s Bank Bartley Branch, Post Offices in Bartley and Indianola, Southwest Elementary School in Indianola, Southwest Junior-Senior High School in Bartley, and published in the Valley Voice newspaper and on the school website. Notice of the meeting was given in advance to all members prior to the meeting date.**

**Moved by Teter, seconded by McConville, to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2026, Board Meeting. Ayes: Teter, Brooks, Meyers, McConville, and Neseth. Nays: None. Motion carried.**

**Moved by McConville, seconded by Brooks, to approve the claims as presented. Ayes: McConville, Meyers, Brooks, Teter, O’Dea, and Neseth. Nays: None. Motion carried.**

**Tara Fries arrived at 7:36 PM.**

**The treasurer’s report was presented to the Board.**




The current rates for bus drivers are \$65 per route and \$18 per hour. No motion, rates will remain the same.

Moved by Neseth, seconded by Teter, to approve the quote for the chemical treatment of the cooling tower. The existing Dolphin system is now obsolete and no longer serviceable. Ayes: O'Dea, Meyers, Brooks, Neseth, Teter, and McConville. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by McConville, to approve the purchase of a new pole vault pit. The current pit has wear and tear and is in need of replacement. Ayes: O'Dea, Teter, Meyers, Brooks, Neseth, and McConville. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Teter, seconded by Meyers, to approve the resale of used Chromebooks for local students or community members to purchase. Ayes: O'Dea, Neseth, Brooks, Teter, Meyers, and McConville. Nays: None. Motion carried.



Superintendent Billeter reported on the selling of 1997 coach bus on AuctionTime on April 29th. Additional surplus items will be sold May 2nd, with other items already listed at the auction. New Teacher Orientation is scheduled for August 3, 2026.

Superintendent Billeter reported on behalf of Principal Springer on the continuation of semester test incentives. If students maintain certain criteria, they will be exempt from taking semester tests. Graduation planning is underway and will be held May 9th , 2026, at the Southwest Jr/Sr Highschool.

Principal Fries reported on a successful Professional Development Day. The focus was on differentiation and moving students up or down levels, based off of their current needs. The Edgerton Explorit Center visited the Elementary students for an eventful day of learning. The center focuses on Science and the students enjoyed the hands on experience. Field Day will take place on May 14th, the Southwest Foundation will sell lunch.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by McConville, to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. Ayes: O'Dea, Teter, McConville, Neseth, Meyers, and Brooks. Nays: None. 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 11, 2026, at 7:30 p.m. at the Southwest Junior-Senior High School in Bartley.



Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are excited to share details about our upcoming Field Day!

Date: May 14th

Location: Bartley High School Track

Elementary students will be bused to the high school track in Bartley, where they will eat a sack lunch before activities begin. Field Day events will start at 12:00 PM. Please note that the high school will have a 12:00 PM dismissal that day.

Bus routes will run on a normal schedule at the end of the day. If you have a junior high or high school student who rides the bus, they will need to remain at the track until the normal dismissal time.

If you would like to take your child home after Field Day, they must be signed out with their classroom teacher.

To help your child have a great day, please:

Dress them in athletic clothing appropriate for the weather

Send a water bottle

Apply or send sunscreen

Field Day Rotation Schedule

(20-minute rotations - announced by PA system)

Round 1 - 12:10

K: Gunny Sack | 1st: 50M | 2nd: Softball | 3rd: Obstacle | 4th: Long Jump | 5th: Frisbee | 6th: 100M

Round 2 - 12:30

K: 100M | 1st: Gunny Sack | 2nd: 50M | 3rd: Softball | 4th: Obstacle | 5th: Long Jump | 6th: Frisbee

Round 3 - 12:50

K: Frisbee | 1st: 100M | 2nd: Gunny Sack | 3rd: 50M | 4th: Softball | 5th: Obstacle | 6th: Long Jump

Round 4 - 1:10

K: Long Jump | 1st: Frisbee | 2nd: 100M | 3rd: Gunny Sack | 4th: 50M | 5th: Softball | 6th: Obstacle

Break - 1:30-1:40

*Water & Restroom*

*Round 5 - 1:40*

*K: Obstacle | 1st: Long Jump | 2nd: Frisbee | 3rd: 100M | 4th: Gunny Sack | 5th: 50M | 6th: Softball*

*Round 6 - 2:00*

*K: Softball | 1st: Obstacle | 2nd: Long Jump | 3rd: Frisbee | 4th: 100M | 5th: Gunny Sack | 6th: 50M*

*Round 7 - 2:20*

*K: 50M | 1st: Softball | 2nd: Obstacle | 3rd: Long Jump | 4th: Frisbee | 5th: 100M | 6th: Gunny Sack*

*2:40 PM - Optional 400m, 300m, and 200m races (for interested students)*

*3:05 PM - Return to camps*

*Please wait to rotate groups until announced by the PA system or according to the time schedule.*

*We are looking forward to a fun and active day for all students!*

*If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out.*

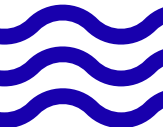


# SOUTHWEST SCHOOL LUNCH MENU

May 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
his institution is equal opportunity provider"					1. Breakfast Pancakes Lunch Pulled Pork Sandwich Elem Only Chicken Nuggets	2.
	4. Breakfast Bagel Lunch Jeffy Burger Elem Only Mac & Cheese	5. Breakfast Cereal Lunch Taco Salad Elem Only Walking Tacos	6. Breakfast Breakfast Pizza Lunch Breaded Beef Pattie Elem Only Pizza	7. Breakfast Fruitel Lunch Hamburger /Cheeseburger	8. Breakfast Churro Lunch Pancake Sausage Stick Elem Only Pepperoni Dipstick	9.
	11. Breakfast Cooks Choice Lunch Cooks Choice Elem Only Orange Chicken	12. Breakfast Cooks Choice Lunch Cooks Choice	13. Breakfast Cooks Choice Lunch Cooks Choice	14. Breakfast Cooks Choice Lunch Cooks Choice	15. Breakfast Cooks Choice Lunch Cooks Choice	16.
	18. Breakfast Cooks Choice Lunch Cooks Choice	19. Breakfast Cooks Choice Lunch Sack Lunch	20.	21.	22.	**Menu Subject to Change **Salad Bar daily **Milk With all Meals





26	27	28	29	30	1	2
		<b>May</b>			10:30am: RPAC TRACK	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	RPAC Rain Date (track/golf) 8:00am: 6th grade field trip 6:30pm: Awards Night	10:00am: BGolf @ Hitchcock Co (McCook) 1:00pm: JH Track at Cambridge 3:00pm: Best of the West Track	6:45am: 5th Grade Field Trip 8:00am: 6th Grade to Danbury Depot 8:00am: 3rd Grade Field Trip	7:35am: NHS Meeting 10:00am: TR@Alma	8:00am: Sr. Breakfast	10:30am: GRADUATION
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	10:00am: JH Track @ DCS (RPAC) 7:30pm: School Board Meeting	8:30am: 2nd Grade Field Trip 10:00am: BGolf Cattle Trail @ Medicine Valley	11:00am: District Track	10:00am: BGolf @ Bertrand 12:00pm: Elem Field Day	8:00am: Pre School Field Trip	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	10:00am: BGolf Districts		1:00pm: Early Dismissal		8:30am: State Track	GYM FLOORS REFINISHED (GYM CLOSED) 8:00am: State Track
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
GYM FLOORS REFINISHED (GYM CLOSED)	GYM FLOORS REFINISHED (GYM CLOSED)	GYM FLOORS REFINISHED (GYM CLOSED)	GYM FLOORS REFINISHED (GYM CLOSED) 10:00am: State Boys Golf	MV BBB Camp GYM FLOORS REFINISHED (GYM CLOSED)	6 Man All Star Game GYM FLOORS REFINISHED (GYM CLOSED)	GYM FLOORS REFINISHED (GYM CLOSED)
31	1	2	3	4	5	6