

JANUARY 2019 NEWSLETTER

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT Ryan Knippelmeyer

First, I would like to thank our school community for a great 1st semester of the 2018-2019 school year. Our schools are always busy with numerous activities that our students have been participating in almost daily. We look forward to a great 2nd semester of the school year!

AQuESTT: Accountability for a Quality Education System, Today and Tomorrow – Beginning with the 2015-16 school year, a new program at the state level was implemented, called AQuESTT. This program was developed by the Nebraska Department of Education and will be used as the state's accountability system.

AQuESTT is a more than a test-based method for measuring student achievement. AQuESTT considers the broader educational experience and success of each student, not just student performance on mandated state tests. Student growth and improvement over time are just as important and taken into consideration under the AQuESTT system. This system is built on six key tenants: 1) Positive partnerships, relationships, and student success, 2) transitions, 3) educational opportunities and access, 4) college and career readiness, 5) assessment, and 6) educator effectiveness. Success in these areas will result in better outcomes for all students and schools.

The AQuESTT system will classify schools into four categories; Excellent, Great, Good, and Needs Improvement. Three schools in the Needs Improvement area will be identified by the state as priority schools and will receive additional assistance from the state level, similar to what was used in the previous

accountability system. Under the AQuESTT system, we continue to administer state assessments and that data will be used within the AQuESTT formula, along with the other five tenants. As a school and district, we will use this information as a part of our School Improvement Process on a yearly basis. More information about AQuESTT can be found on the Nebraska Department of Education website.

Congratulations to our Teachers, Students, Staff, Parents and Community! For the 2017-2018 school year, Elmwood-Murdock Public Schools, as a District has been classified as Excellent (4), one of twenty-eight schools in the state of Nebraska. This is a great accomplishment for our District and reflects the work that has been accomplished in recent years. Our High School was classified as Great (3), our Junior High was classified as Excellent (4), and our Elementary was classified as Great (3). We are extremely pleased with these classifications, but know that there are always things to improve upon and that things never stay the same. We're either improving or not improving. We will continue to work to provide our students the best possible education and continue to work to remain an Excellent school district!

Enrollment Projection Study:

As you are probably aware, as a school district we have been researching over the past 2-3 years the possibility of updating some of our facilities, primarily athletic facilities, because they were not addressed during the 2008 school renovations. This past summer, the school board made the informed decision to take a step back and conduct an enrollment projection study to determine what our school enrollment could look like over the next 10 years and whether we

should be considering the addition of academic space while also considering athletic facilities. The Board contracted with RSP & Associates out of Overland Park, KS, to conduct this study. To summarize briefly, the results of the study show that we can expect to see continued growth in the number of students attending our schools. As many of you know, we are close to being at maximum capacity at our elementary at this time. With the likelihood of continued growth, we will soon see capacity issues at our elementary building. RSP worked with local, county, and state entities when compiling the data for our review. The premise of their projections can and may be affected by various aspects such as the economy, Federal Reserve rates, option enrollment, etc. So the projections they provided us are merely that... projections. This data gives us an outline of what could happen, but not necessarily what will happen and we will utilize this information on a yearly basis to assist us in anticipation of staffing needs as well as facilities needs. In the coming months the school board will make some decisions on areas that need to be addressed within our school district. A copy of the entire RSP & Associates report can be found on our school website or you can contact the high school office if you would like a copy of the report.

Keeping Our Students Safe – Stopping for School Buses:

Nationwide there has been very tragic incidents recently around school bus stops. Please be reminded of the following laws that pertain to stopping for school buses on the roadway (as referenced from the Nebraska Safety Center):

Two-Lane Roadway – When the school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop.

Two-Lane Roadway with a Center Turning Lane – When the school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop.

Four-Lane Roadway without a Median Separation – When the school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop.

Divided Highway of Four Lanes or More with a Median Separation – When the school bus stops for passengers, only traffic traveling in the same direction as the bus must stop.

Roadway of Four or More Lanes with a Continuous Center Turning Lane – When the school bus stops for passengers, only traffic traveling in the same direction as the bus must stop.

Child Passenger Safety Law Changes

Starting January 1, 2019, Nebraska's child passenger laws change to keep children safer as they travel. New provisions of the law include:

- ♦ Children must ride rear-facing up to age 2 or until they reach the upper weight and height limit allowed by the car seat manufacturer;
- ♦ Children up to age 8 must ride in a correctly installed car seat or booster seat (this does not apply to school buses);
- ♦ Children up to age 8 must ride in the back seat, as long as there is a back seat equipped with a seat belt and is not already occupied by other children under eight years of age.

**SECONDARY PRINCIPAL
ATHLETIC DIRECTOR
Tim Allemang**

We've had another amazing start to the school year! We have completed our fall activity season and are half way through the winter activity season.

The fall activity season ended for our girl's volleyball team by rounding out the schedule with a respectable 15 and 16 record. The boy's football team completed their season with a 4 and 4 record. The cross-country team didn't make it to state, but everyone improved on his or her record times. The girl's golf team also improved their scores and enjoyed competing throughout the season.

Along these same lines, there have been a lot of changes this school year with the addition of new staff members, not to mention changing from 11-Man to 8-Man in Football. As a result, I would like to welcome our new teachers, Mr. Gary Grinvalds (Vocal Music), Mr. Lance Steffen (Social Sciences), and Mr. Aaron Pryor (PE). Mr. Grinvalds comes to us directly from college and grew up in the town of Yutan, Nebraska. Mr. Steffen graduated from Elmwood-Murdock, but comes to us from Perkins County, where he taught and coached football. Mr. Pryor comes from Gretna, Nebraska, where he taught PE and coached basketball. I am excited to have them on our staff and wish to welcome them to Elmwood-Murdock Schools.

Our vocal and instrumental students have already been busy. Mr. Grinvalds' students winning honors are:

All State Choir: Noah Arent, Molly Feile, and Gus Pope

High School ECNC Honor Choir: Kate Zakaras, Spencer Koehn, Gus Pope, Rylee Hogue, Ethan Clements, Abraham Vidaurre, Justin Wolph, Maggie Richter, Tessa Robertson, Molly Feile, Noah Arent, Katie Hanson, and Sophie Frank.

Junior High ECNC Honor Choir: Riley Wilson, Max Wynegar, Jordan Vogler, Karly Anderson, Victoria McNaught, Nathan Miller, Will Platt, Ava Kennedy, Alexis Borne-meier, Mia Rikli, Sam Clements, Lily Pope, and Angela Brockhoff. The following are Mr. Hanson's

students who have achieved group honors:

4th Place in Class C at, "Applejack Parade"

17th Place in Class C at, "Harvest of Harmony" out of 35 schools

We held our annual Veterans Day program on Monday, November 12th with guest speaker Don Klau-mann and the Gretna Legion Riders, who presented proper Flag Etiquette, and how to fold an American Flag. The Student Councils helped organize the program and some students spoke by reading letters and introducing area Veterans. The Concert Band, lead by Mr. Michael Hanson, performed as well as the Vocal Mixed Choir, lead by Mr. Gary Grinvalds.

After the program the Veterans and their spouses were invited to take part in a special lunch in the cafeteria, which was served by the Student Council members.

The HS Student Council officially started their annual, "Canned Food Drive" for the Elmwood Community Center. Their goal is to collect over 3,000 canned food items to help families/people in need over the holidays.

To continue, we had 55 HS students and 35 JH students make first quarter Honor Roll, with 9 of the HS students making High Honor Roll. For their efforts these students were bussed into Lincoln, where they enjoyed lunch at Valentinos. We wish to thank the, "American Exchange" and the, "Corn Growers" State Banks for sponsoring these events.

On another outstanding note, the Drama department had a very successful season, placing 2nd in the ECNC 1-Act Play contest and placing 3rd in districts. The title of their play was, "Godspell". They also put on an amazing Dinner Theater per-

formance on Saturday, November 17, 2018.

Students who received, "Outstanding Performance" awards at the ECNC contest were:

Cody Bornemeier, Andy Meyer, Valerie Miller, Molly Feile, Rylee Hogue, Gus Pope, Noah Arent, and Ham Vidaurre

The following students won, "Outstanding Performance" recognition at the district competition: Noah Arent, Cody Bornemeier, Molly Feile, Rylee Hogue, Andy Meyer, Riley Rose, Bre Romero, Alyssa Closner, Azael Mbantayne Bagari, Constance Baker, Hannah Mather, and Gus Pope.

Congratulations to Mrs. Hogue, Mr. Grinvalds, and the entire Cast and Crew!

To continue, the Volleyball team had another successful season and several of our student athletes won All Conference honors. Please congratulate the following: 1st Team – Lauren Justesen; 3rd Team – Nicole Meyer and Sydney Kunz; Honorable Mention – Chloe Hosier

Football All Conference honors went to: Drake Spohr (LB), Andy Meyer (LB), Massimo Lojing (DB), Tyler Marlatt (OL), Jared Drake (FB), and Noah Willey (S).

We would also like to recognize and congratulate our Girls Golf team members: Rylee Hogue and Morgan Mills, as well as our Cross Country students: Austin Hawks; Chaz Mellen, Constance Baker; Tucker Oehlerking; Sara Kicak; Angelo Leone; Lily Pope; Brianna Ross; and Riley Wilson,

FBLA and FCCLA have been busy as well, preparing for their school year with various activities and we are proud to announce we have an FBLA State Officer this year, Morgan Mills. She has attended several conferences and prepared presenta-

tions, where she has had to speak to other state members, including the National Fall Leadership Conference. We also want to recognize a Kate Zakaras for being selected to be a PEER Officer with FCCLA. Kate has been busy presenting very important topics of discussion to our students and will also be presenting at other schools and conferences.

Congratulations to all of our amazing students who have worked extremely hard on there after school activities and did an outstanding job on their academic courses, as well.

We took 8 students to the ECNC Leadership Conference on Monday, August 27th, where they heard from Billy McGuigan, Karen Haase, and NSAA Youth Advisory Team. Herb Anderson provided the recreational activities. This event was put on and paid for by the ECNC and we wish to thank them for their support of this activity. I also wish to thank Conestoga for generously allowing us to use their school site for this event.

We also had our annual Homecoming Coronation and Dance earlier this fall. The coronation was held at halftime of the FB game vs. Brownell-Talbot. This year's King and Queen are: Andy Meyer and Sydney Kunz. The other candidates were: Elyse Drake, Faith Offner, Carter Bornemeier, and Nick Langfeldt. The dance was held on Saturday, October 13, 2018.

The E-M Booster Club has been busy planning and holding various fundraisers. The Booster Club meets monthly and would love to have anyone that is interested, with students in grades 7-12, come and join in on the fun, and help with all of E-M student body activities throughout the school year. For example, during the Johnson-Brock Football game the Booster Club held its annual Tailgate BBQ on Friday, August 24th. We wish to

thank the, "Elmwood Meat Plant", Randy Marlatt, and Tom and Kathy Goudie for their generous support of this annual activity.

The Booster Club also sponsored the annual Booster Club Volleyball Triangular on Tuesday, October 16, 2018. The Booster Club is currently working on Clothing Sales, Poinsettia Sales, and the annual Soup Supper; which will be held on Friday, January 18th during the Milford Boys' and Girls' basketball games. Again, we encourage anyone that wants to help out to come join in on the fun. Our February meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 26, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. Hope to see you there!

In closing, I wanted to touch a little bit on student attendance and the importance of getting to school on time. As I'm sure you are aware, school is a building block for students to learn how to succeed in the adult world. As a result, attendance is an essential part of every student's future career. Habits are habits and they develop early in life and unfortunately they can stick with us for the rest of our lives, therefore it is extremely important to develop positive ones. As a parent, it is very important to facilitate your child/children in having good attendance at school from an early age, thus building good habits that will hopefully help with success later in life.

It is important to note, good attendance, and this includes being on time, is one of the number one concerns of industry leaders and business owners throughout our country, especially when it comes to hiring employees.

In concluding, if you want your child to have a greater chance of success it will be important to develop the positive habit of good attendance and being on time. I hope this newsletter finds everyone in good spirits and GO KNIGHTS!!!

ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL

Bruce Friedrich

I would like to thank the parents for all of their support and assistance during the first semester of the 2018-19 school year. I would especially like to thank our parent organization, S.O.S. (Support Our Students) for all that they do to help the students and staff of our school district. The S.O.S. has helped with Grandparent's Day, held a Fall Festival for the students, and supported Family Reading Night. The S.O.S. also funds assemblies for the elementary students. We had an Animal Tales assembly in September and have a Robotics assembly scheduled for February. The S.O.S. also helps fund our Science Fair and helps with our Field Day at the end of the year. The S.O.S. has also helped fund the Elementary Art program. We also do concession stands at high school games to raise money. The S.O.S. has also purchased a shade structure for our preschool playground. This structure will be erected in the spring. The S.O.S. also supported The Nebraska Brass Assembly in December. I would like to thank the S.O.S. for funding and supporting these activities and programs for our students.

The Spring Carnival is scheduled for April 5, 2019. This carnival is organized by the S.O.S. parent organization. This carnival gives parents an opportunity to become involved with our major fundraiser of the year. It takes many volunteers to have a successful Spring Carnival. Please consider helping at the Spring Carnival in April.

We had an art program fundraiser this fall. We raised over \$11,000 through the sale of cookie dough and other gift items. I would like to thank the parents, family, friends, and patrons for their support of this fundraiser.

I would also like to thank staff for

their dedication to the students of our district. All the staff including the teachers, paraeducators, nurse, bus drivers, custodians, substitutes, kitchen and office personnel play an important roll in the success of our students and school. For the students to be successful the staff must work together and have high expectations of themselves and the students.

We also have students that believe that education is important and do their best on their schoolwork and on the local and state assessments. I am also very proud of our students' behavior, efforts, and achievements on our State and local assessments.

Our students having been doing a fantastic job with our Accelerated Reading Program. Accelerated Reader is a reading incentive program that encourages students to read. The students read books and then take tests on computers to check for their understanding of what they read. Students get points, word, and book totals. Students set goals for themselves and then are given recognition when they reach their goals. Even the staff is getting involved in the Accelerated Reading Program. Staff are reading books and also taking tests and keeping track of their points and words. I would like to thank Mrs. Paulsen for overseeing this program. Keep reading!

I would also like to mention our Elementary Student Council. We currently have 18 students in grades four, five, and six on the Student Council. We stress leadership and service with our Student Council members. The students help at concessions to raise money to help support and fund various activities and programs in the Elementary. The Student Council members taught wellness lessons to the other students during Be Your Best Week. The students also help with our recycling program by picking up re-

cyclables from the classrooms several times a week. These students also help Mrs. Paulsen with the School Store and help with various fundraising drives throughout the year. They are currently helping with our food drive for the local food pantry. I would like to thank the Student Council Members and Mrs. Paulsen for all of their efforts.

Once each month we have a Positive Behavior Assembly for our students. Teachers and staff take this time to recognize students for their positive behaviors and accomplishments. We read students names and they are given a pencil and certificate with their behavior or accomplishment listed. During the month, we try and "Catch Students being Good" We give them a "Caught Being Good Card" that is placed into a glass bowl in the office. At the Positive Behavior Assembly, we draw twenty cards from the jar and these students can then spend a free dollar at the School Store. Students also receive personal pan pizza certificates from the Elmwood C Store. I would like to thanks the C Store for their participation and support.

We also stress our school motto with the students. Our motto is Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be your Best. Teachers work with students on expectations and teach lessons to help students meet their goals in each of these areas.

At this time, I would like to announce that I am planning to retire from the Elmwood-Murdock Public Schools in June of 2019. I have spent 38 years in education and 36 years with the Elmwood and Elmwood-Murdock Public Schools. I have been Elementary School Principal for the last 29 years.

This is a very difficult decision but I believe that it is time to move on to the next chapter of my life. I would like to thank the parents, stu-

dents, patrons, and staff for their support over the years. It has truly been my pleasure to work for and serve the Elmwood-Murdock Public Schools.

**DIRECTOR OF
STUDENT SERVICES
Trisha Nichelson**

Updates in the areas of Curriculum and Instruction, Special Education, and Guidance

**Curriculum and Instruction
School Improvement Goals**

Our current school improvement goals are:

- ♦ All students will improve their reading (fluency and comprehension) across the curriculum.
- ♦ All students will be prepared to successfully thrive in a highly competitive global technological society.

Our school motto is to Empower All Students to Achieve Success.

Together, with staff and students, we are working to achieve these improvement goals and ensure that we are fulfilling our school motto.

Curriculum

The district purchased new math intervention curriculum this year. This purchase was for the Math Advantage program at the elementary and is also used by elementary special education teachers to help provide additional support in the area of math. This district is also looking at purchasing new math curriculum for the elementary students as the current curriculum being used is not matching the needs of learners or matching the new Nebraska State Standards.

Instruction

Teachers in the district have been working hard to learn a new teaching model called Marzano. This teaching model provides growth opportunities for teachers in many areas of instruction. One strength of Marzano is the ability for each

teacher to find their teaching strengths and then also find areas where they can improve. Effective teaching practices hence impact student learning.

State Assessments

The state requires two assessments to be given in the spring to all students in third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and eleventh grades. The eleventh graders take the ACT exam where the other grades take the NSCAS (Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System). These exams test students in the areas of reading, math, and science. These exams are used by the state to monitor student progress and ensure school accountability for student learning.

**Special Education
Birth- 5 Services**

Many children are born with or acquire conditions that can delay their normal growth and development. Fortunately, many of these conditions can be improved if parents recognize the problem early and seek help. These conditions may impact a child's vision, speech/language, motor skills, socialization, thinking or hearing.

If you suspect your child may have developmental delays, the District offers comprehensive services for infants, toddlers, and preschool age children who have disabilities. Elmwood-Murdock is committed to providing developmentally appropriate opportunities for children to learn and grow in a safe, stimulating, and nurturing environment, using research based practices.

Check the milestones your child should have reached by his or her 1st birthday. This link provided by the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention gives specific milestones. Please remember that these are only guidelines. <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/milestones-1yr.html>

If a parent or a physician has questions or concerns about their child's development for infants and toddlers to 3 years of age that person should contact the local Early Development Network Referral Agency of the child/family or call: Nebraska Child Find (toll Free) at 1-888-806-6287.

For additional information on Nebraska Child Find for all children, please visit: <http://www.childfind.ne.gov>.

Once a referral has been made the following will take place:

1. The referral will be appointed to a Services Coordinator from Education Service Unit #3, who will contact the family within seven days to determine if they are interested in Early Development Network services.
2. With the family's permission, the Services Coordinator will arrange for an assessment with the local school district to determine the unique needs of the child and his or her eligibility. The Services Coordinator can link the family with community resources before the assessment if needed.
3. If the child qualifies, the Services Coordinator will work with Elmwood-Murdock Public Schools to identify others who can participate on a team to help the family develop an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), which sets goals for the child and family and identifies activities and services needed to achieve these goals. The IFSP will be completed within 45 days, so the family can access Early Development Network services as quickly as possible

If as a parent you have concerns or questions with your three to five year old child's development set up an appointment for your child to be screened by contacting Trisha Nichelson at tnichelson@emknights.org or call 402-867-2341 or 402-994-2125.

MTSS

MTSS (Multi-tiered System of Support) is the intervention process initiated by the Nebraska Department of Education. This process has given a guideline as to how school districts need to have a system in place for providing interventions needed for all students to be successful in

school. We have been working to improve the MTSS process at Elmwood-Murdock. At the elementary level, there are programs such as Reading Advantage and Math Advantage which are used to support student learning. At the junior and senior high level teachers are working to provide support before and after school or even during a Saturday school time. Staff will continue to work to create opportunities for all students to be successful.

Currently, the district has over seventy students who are being serviced with Special Education services ranging from birth to twenty-one. These services are covered with an Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, Speech and Language Pathologist, Behavioral Therapist, Audiologist, School Psychologist, Reading Specialist, Counselors, Special Education Teachers and Classroom Teachers. The district utilizes the Educational Service Unit to help provide these services for our students. It is great to see how so many people work together to help ensure our students' success.

Junior High/High School Guidance Counselor

SENCAP/Southeast Community College

This fall over 33 students participated in the Southeast Community College SENCAP program. There are two avenues for students to learn and grow through this program: one is the college preparatory classes which count as credit and the other is the career path courses which offer students the ability to explore different careers they may be interested in. Southeast Community College partners with Elmwood-Murdock schools to help students financially with a portion of these courses.

ACT/PSAT/Accuplacer

This fall over thirty students took the ACT, PSAT, or Accuplacer here at Elmwood-Murdock. These exams are college entrance exams to determine eligibility to attend various post-secondary institutions. These exams also help students to determine what course path they may need to take to obtain degrees they are seeking. The ASVAB was also given to all juniors. This exam helps students learn more about their career pathway strengths and determines eligibility to join the armed forces. Juniors will receive test preparation through John Baylor test prep and the ACT Online Test Prep. The John Baylor test prep will be provided at the school in face-to-face sessions and the ACT Online Test Prep is available to all juniors.

NSAA Academic All-State

Nine students were selected for Academic All-State for the fall 2018 sports seasons. Criteria for this award are maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.7 or above and demonstrating leadership both on and off the field.

EducationQuest Apply-to-College Day

Juniors and seniors took part in a presentation from EducationQuest teaching them some important fundamentals of applying and seeking college degrees. Topics covered were filling out applications, the FAFSA, scholarship opportunities, financial aid and other options for funding post secondary school. Each senior was encouraged to apply to at least one college and for at least one scholarship on this day.

K-6 SCHOOL COUNSELOR Judi Sigler

It's been my pleasure getting to know the students, families, and staff at Elmwood-Murdock Elementary. The students here show a lot of kindness and respect. I can tell

they put in a lot of effort not only with academics, but in how they treat the people around them. I am at the school Monday, Wednesday, and part of Friday. Each week I meet with each classroom for 20-30 minute lessons. I call these classes "Character Education". Occasionally, I meet with small groups or individually to address specific, personal concerns (for example, friendships or academics). Typically, I may not notify you unless: a) there is a safety concern, b) your child has asked to see me repeatedly, or c) the problem is significant.

School counselors help students with academic goals, social and personal development, and career development. Social and emotional learning, also known as "SEL", is at the foundation of my school counseling program. Usually, when people hear about "emotional" learning, they might think this means "touchy-feely" topics--it's so much more. Understanding and recognizing our emotions, as well as the emotions of others, has been shown to be a larger contributor to success in life than IQ!

Over the past few months I have taught lessons about our brains and how certain parts "protect" us and trigger emotional responses and how other parts of our brain help us make logical choices. Some of the lessons included ways of calming and focusing. We've also learned emotional vocabulary and will continue that all year.

In the coming months I plan to deliver lessons on kindness, and respect. I will also incorporate career and education-related topics. Feel free to contact me with any questions or suggestions.

PRESCHOOL Jenny Schroll/Kimberly Spilker

We are enjoying our ninth year of Preschool at Elmwood-Murdock!

We currently have twenty-eight 3 year olds, and twenty-seven 4 year olds. Due to the high number of students in both, Mrs. Spilker, has been added to the preschool team. Due to high number in both classes, we are separating the classes into two groups. We also have two wonderful para-educators, Mrs. Kim Griffin, and Mrs. Janelle Fleischman, who get to spend their days with us in the preschool room.

In the 3 year old class, they attend school 5 days a week for 2 ½ hours. We are focusing on shapes, colors, learning the alphabet, alphabet sounds, number recognition, and 1:1 correspondence. The students are also learning how to share and play cooperatively with others during this time. During class time, we are also working on our social skills and listening techniques.

In the 4 year old class, they attend school 5 days a week for 4 hours. The students eat lunch at school, which allows them the opportunity to learn about the school before they reach kindergarten. The students are working with numbers, alphabet, handwriting, Social-Emotional skills, Science, and Social Studies. We are working with the curriculum, Handwriting Without Tears, which is used school wide.

We are very thankful to be working in such a great school!

KINDERGARTEN **Diane Vice/Cora DeMike**

'Twas the time before Christmas
When all through the class
Learning was showing in each
lad and each lass.
Each sense was used by everyone there,
Excitement and smiles showed
the children did care.

The children got nestled all
snug with their books.
They've now learned that each
picture deserves a good look.

With good listening and sitting
as some of our rules,
The teachers felt proud of

how they acted in school.
In earlier days there arose such a clatter,
Anyone near would wonder
what was the matter.

Counting to 100, they can do in a flash,
They do it each day during the opening bash.
Using tens and fives to 100 they already know,
Applying those numbers will be the next show.

When working on writing sentences appear,
Many write words to match pictures held dear.

With teachers, Vice and DeMike,
so lively and quick,
The children have had lessons
that seem to stick.

They know more now than when they came,
And here are some reasons
we're proud to name...

The letters,
The numbers,
The patterns,
The sounds, The rhyming
The cutting,
The coloring in bounds.

So far this school year we've all had some fun,
But please wait and see...
their learning's just begun!

So you'll hear us exclaim as
Second semester draws near,
"Just wait and see what we k
now at the end of the year!"

FIRST GRADE **Vanesse Drueke/Kori Duntz and Celena Mortimer**

On the 1st week of first grade my
teacher gave to me, routines and
rules and games to get to know each
other and build our character.

On the 2nd week of first grade my
teacher gave to me, counting, com-
paring, and adding numbers.

On the 3rd week of first grade my
teacher gave to me, math strategies
to learn addition and subtraction
facts, patterns, shapes, directional
words on a grid and 3 kinds of
graphs.

On the 4th week of first grade my
teacher gave to me, knowledge of
fire safety, bats, spiders, Thanksgiv-
ing with the pilgrims and Winter
Holidays Around the World.

On the 5th week of first grade my
teacher gave to me, centers to
demonstrate the skills we have
learned in phonics, reading, and

writing.

On the 6th week of first grade my
teacher gave to me, a guidance les-
son on building a school communi-
ty with teamwork and working to-
gether.

On the 7th week of first grade my
teacher gave to me, a computer to
practice my math facts on Xtra-
math.com

On the 8th week of first grade my
teacher gave to me, a book to read
for AR points.

On the 9th week of first grade my
teacher gave to me, 5 high frequen-
cy words with some amazing words
to build my vocabulary.

On the 10th week of first grade my
teacher gave to me, computer activi-
ties to practice spelling words,
math skills with IXL, and writing
skills using Puppet Pals.

On the 11th week of first grade my
teacher gave to me, MAPS tests to
see how much I have learned.

On the 12th week of first grade my
teacher gave to me, a vacation from
my friends to spend with family and
lead us into 2019.

SECOND GRADE **Carae Oehlerking/Deb Novak**

When August begins students are
introduced to and reminded of the
"Knights' Motto". They learn to
practice these skills throughout
their day: BE SAFE, BE RE-
SPECTFUL, BE RESPONSIBLE,
BE YOUR BEST! Practicing inde-
pendence is key in the classroom
and hopefully carries over to home.
Throughout each week students are
encouraged to treat others the way
they want to be treated, to do the
right things, and to work on becom-
ing effective problem solvers.

Second Grade is working hard in
many areas. Our Reading Street

series incorporates reading, writing, and language. Students are engaged with Amazing Words, weekly vocabulary, questions of the week, concept videos, many genres of literature and become authors of different types of writing. Continue to read at home for fluency, expression and comprehension!

Math has flown by with a review of the basic facts. We have begun introducing new concepts and will continue to expand our minds day by day. Your help at home is appreciated by practicing the basic addition and subtraction facts, counting money, telling time, and incorporating math into your every day lives.

We are flip-flopping between science and social studies each quarter. Students are making connections to life in each chapter. In Social Studies we have learned about different types of communities, map reading skills, and being a good neighbor. We will soon be starting a Postcards From Around the World project to explore geography and cultures. In Science we have discussed plants, animals, and the habitats they survive in. We will continue to expand our knowledge with the areas of Earth Science and Physical Science. Reading, charts, projects, and experiments keep our interest high.

When December arrived students were introduced to different cultures and their holiday celebrations around the world. Students learned about seven different holiday celebrations and created a craft for each country. They enjoyed coloring, cutting, pasting, painting, and playing a game.

Second grade also keeps busy with art projects (thank you Mrs. Campbell), handwriting, PE, music, and guidance (thank you Ms. Sigler). A busy, fun-filled day flies by and before we know it, Friday has arrived. Thank you for all of your extra help

at home! YOU DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

THIRD GRADE

Cayle Burbach/Jennifer Justus

If you observe any third grader for nine months you will see some amazing changes. They are becoming more adult like, developing a sense of humor, keying in on what really interests them, and hopefully becoming a lifelong learner. In the beginning of the year we gathered a lot of data, last year's MAPS and Dibels scores. We have decided that we need to concentrate on three main areas to help our students be successful: reading, math, and writing. Our students need to be able to read, understand, communicate in the 21st century, and be able to become problem solvers.

Reading is so important because we read in almost every subject. We work on different fluency passages to promote reading with expression and hopefully getting students closer to being able to read 100 words per minute or more. Our whole morning is spent in a language arts block. We do reading, writing, spelling, and grammar. We will begin to learn cursive in April, after our state assessment. We read many genres of literature and give students many opportunities to practice skills and master comprehension. We are so proud of their growth thus far. Thanks to all those parents who work with their child on their homework or fix-it work. The reading at home really helps the students to grow and strengthens comprehension. We have started a reading incentive program with the students to get them excited about reading at home. They have already read over 15,000 minutes at home!

This year we are working hard to develop a sense of independent reading within a book that is the "right fit". Meaning that the student can read the words, and com-

prehend the story without help from an adult. While doing this, we have taken advantage of the school's Accelerated Reading program and have set a goal for each quarter of 14 points. This means, when a child reads a book, s/he can take a comprehension computer test over it and earn points. At the end of each quarter, the students who have met their goal of 14 points have an A.R. class party.

In writing, students are working on writing quality paragraphs with topic sentences, details and closing sentences. This is a major feat since paragraphing is new to all the third graders. We write many friendly letters and daily journals. This year all of the students are putting their final drafts in a red writing book, which we are sure parents will treasure.

The third graders are zooming through the math curriculum. We have already studied place value, rounding, addition, subtraction, graphs, multiplication, and telling time. We will finish December with some holiday review math, and look forward to measurement in January.

To wrap up our year, 3rd graders get to study Social Studies and Science each day. Each section gets 2 quarters of both classes, and they switch teachers. In S.S., they are studying the various first communities in the U.S.A, and the different types of communities. They have learned about the First Native American, Spanish, and European Communities. In Science, they have studied animal adaptations and changes that effect the ecosystems.

FOURTH GRADE

Cindy Backemeyer

Kate Nutzman

"Education is the foundation on which we build our future"

Fourth grade is a fantastic year

where students grow in both academics and organization. This is also a year for increased responsibility when it comes to being prepared for projects, homework, and tests. We see improvement in organization, work ethic, and responsibility. We often tell the students that the strategies we are developing now, are the same skills that will help them become lifelong learners and be successful in whatever career they choose.

Reading is essential, as we use it in every subject area. We spend a great deal of our day building reading fluency to aid students in becoming successful independent readers. Being a proficient reader will help students be strong in all subject areas. We do quarterly fluency reads, and students read aloud often in class. Our reading series does a wonderful job of helping us to learn vocabulary and different skills such as fact and opinion, cause, and effect, generalizing, and inferring. To strengthen and evaluate comprehension skills we use a program called Accelerated Reader. Students earn points and track words read. Every quarter students have a point goal to meet. Our goal for the third quarter will be 48 points. Many students are working hard at home to reach their goals. Besides independent reading, we are working on novels in small groups, and read aloud activities. All of this helps to encourage fourth graders to love reading.

By the time you read this letter, we will have completed chapter nine in math. This year we have spent a great deal of time practicing multiplication and division facts before we could move on to more difficult concepts. It is "vital" that students have their basic facts memorized. They will use these facts for the rest of their lives and in all future math classes. We also use a math website called IXL. IXL is a wonderful computer program that helps reinforce the skills we are learning in

the classroom. Students can earn awards on IXL by becoming proficient in various math strands. This year we have an exciting opportunity to use the "Makerspace Lab" at the E.S.U. We will use our geometry math skills to build 3-D objects using a 3-D printer. We will go to the E.S.U. on March 13th and 14th.

Elmwood-Murdock is lucky to be one-to-one with Chromebooks in fourth grade. We use our Chromebooks to practice keyboarding through the program called Edutyping. This allows us to learn how to keyboard correctly and type without looking at our fingers. Students are using their Chromebooks in many different ways. Students have used their computer to take weekly reading tests. Students utilize their Chromebooks to review and study for tests using Quizlet, Quizalize, Spelling City, Kahoot, and other online tools. We also use Google Docs as a place to type spelling words and our final draft stories. Google Docs will be a resource students use until 12th grade at Elmwood-Murdock. Students have also been using other programs on their Chromebooks, such as Google Slides to make a slideshow for their Native American projects. Later in the year, we will use our Chromebooks to research and type an animal report. Mr. Dwyer also assists fourth grade in learning new technology concepts.

In Language all of our lessons this year have focused on the Six Traits of Writing: Ideas, Voice, Organization, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions. Four times a week we do English Maintenance editing. This helps us find the errors in a sentence and rewrite the sentence correctly. We have also written several stories this year. All of our stories start with brainstorming and writing a rough draft. Then, we do editing and a final draft. Students are able to type their final drafts in Google Docs. We also do a

great deal of writing in both science and social studies. Both teachers are excited about the growth we have seen in writing this year and hope for even more to come.

We have high expectations for our students. At Elmwood-Murdock we want our students to have a strong work ethic and become well-rounded individuals. We have enjoyed guiding them on their learning journey. Thank you to all the parents for the support they have given us this year. We are so glad to be able to work with you and your child. We can't wait to see even more growth during the second semester.

**FIFTH GRADE READING
SIXTH GRADE
READING/ENGLISH
Heather Holub**

I'm in my 2nd year at Elmwood-Murdock, in which I teach 5th and 6th grade Reading, 6th grade English, along with 5th grade Homeroom. The first semester is an adjustment for the fifth-graders, because they now have four teachers' rooms in which they rotate classes with throughout the day. Therefore, students are learning a lot about their organization skills and being responsible with their work; it takes time to figure out how to organize for all the classes.

In November the 4th, 5th, and 6th grade Student Council walked around the Elmwood and Murdock communities collecting canned goods. The students made a goal to collect 3,000 items to give to the Elmwood Food Pantry. This goal was reached, so thank you to everyone who donated. These items will be donated to people in our communities. What a wonderful time of the year to help out and give what you can!

Fifth grade Reading class has been working hard on vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension skills. Stu-

dents have enjoyed having five minutes of silent reading every day. The second semester will be spent focusing on Prefixes and Suffixes, using context clues, and preparing for the Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System (NSCAS English Language Arts) Test.

The sixth grade Reading class has also been working on Prefixes and Suffixes to help them decode the meaning of unfamiliar or unknown words. For English, students have been writing for a variety of purposes. Some of the students' favorite papers so far include: Persuasive, Fantasy, and Problem & Solution; children came up with ideas for improvements in the Elmwood & Murdock communities. The second semester will be spent writing about the person they each want to become when they grow up, plus the students will be researching a famous person and a future college.

The fifth and sixth graders have been working hard to reach their reading goal for Accelerated Reader (A.R.). This assesses students' comprehension of books they have read. For the second semester, students will be working extremely hard to get more A.R. points than they had in the first semester. By the end of first semester, each fifth grader's goal is to have 36 points, while the goal for the sixth graders is 40 points. The top 5th grade reader has 154.2 points thus far, and the highest 6th grade reader has 260.7 points in the first semester. Terrific work reading and keep up the wonderful effort!

When students enter fifth grade, they receive a Chromebook for the first time in their education career to use during the school day. The students are learning how to utilize the Chromebooks and type, along with being accountable for them. They are to take care of the computers, plus are responsible for making sure they are charged. We are very thankful for the Chromebooks!

FIFTH/SIXTH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES FIFTH GRADE ENGLISH Luke Dlouhy

The 2018-2019 school year got off to great start. It was fun to see the mix of returning Elmwood-Murdock students along with some new faces. We had 3 new students join the 5th grade class and 1 new student join the 6th grade. I have really enjoyed getting to know the incoming 5th graders and continue to learn new things about the returning 6th graders.

Once the school year got underway, the 5th grade students quickly found out it was a big adjustment from the previous year. For the first time in their lives, they began rotating classes instead of being in the same classroom all day. It was challenging at first, but the students have done a great job of learning organizational skills so that they are prepared for all of their classes. This will also help with their adjustment to junior high, as they will already have some practice rotating classes.

I have had the privilege of teaching 5th and 6th grade Social Studies, as well as 5th grade English for two years now. In 5th grade Social Studies, the students have been learning about America's early history. We recently learned about the original 13 colonies and what life would have been like for the colonists during this time period. As we continue, we will be learning about the American Revolution and important events following the Revolution.

The 6th grade Social Studies class is focused on World History, and the students have enjoyed learning about early civilizations throughout the world. In Unit 1, we learned about the Fertile Crescent, Nile River Valley, Indus River Valley, and Huang He Valley. In Unit 2, we have been learning about ancient Greece and Rome. The students

have found Greece and Rome to be particularly interesting, and we are excited to continue learning about the different civilizations throughout the world.

The 5th grade English class has been working hard to improve their writing skills. We have been learning about different aspects of the Six Traits of Writing. So far, the students have spent time learning about "Ideas", "Organization", and "Conventions". When we return in January, we will be focusing on the remaining traits, which include "Word Choice", "Voice", and "Fluency".

As we move into the new year, I am excited to watch the 5th and 6th grade students continue to learn and grow. They have already grown so much since the beginning of the year, and I look forward to seeing that continue as we move through the second half of the year.

FIFTH/SIXTH GRADE SCIENCE FIFTH GRADE COMPUTER Monte Frerichs

It has been a great year. The 6th graders have been working hard on keeping our school safe, being responsible being respectful, and being their best. It is always a big step for students as they begin their last year at the elementary school and start working toward the transition to Junior High. The students have classes in different rooms and also have different teachers throughout the day. I teach 5th and 6th grade Science and 5th grade Computer.

In 5th grade Science the students completed units on Plants, Weather and Climate, and the Energy of Sound and Light. They enjoy lab time where they can use a hands-on approach to make observations and collect data.

In 6th grade Science the students

completed units on Properties of Matter, Energy, and Forces. They also just completed a Marble Maze project that they enjoyed displaying to the public after the winter concert. They are currently learning about simple machines and how they are used to make things work easier.

In 5th grade Computer the most important thing that students learn is how to use technology appropriately. I teach lessons on how to be a good digital citizen and how to be safe using technology. The students have also used a keyboarding program to help with typing skills and techniques. The students use a variety of other programs to help supplement their core subject areas and to present information. We have recently used a drawing website called Sketchpad to create Winter pictures.

As we begin 2019 we will continue to strive for high achievement. Along with lofty academic goals, the 6th grade has high expectations for good character. We believe that having good character traits will mold us into model citizens and set us up for success in the future.

FIFTH/SIXTH GRADE MATH Robin Kuhlman

The sixth grade math class passed adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing fractions with flying colors. They continue to add algebra concepts to their repertoire of math skills. The students concluded the first semester with data analysis by using spreadsheets in Google Drive. Students collected data and analyzed the results using formulas and graphs. The second semester will be spent working on geometry, algebra, and probability as well as preparing for state testing. We also took a group of four students to a math completion at McMillan Magnet Center in Omaha. It was a great experience!

Fifth grade math has been working hard on multiplication and division, customary and metric measurement, graphing data, data analysis and number theory. The second semester will be spent focusing on fractions, geometry and basic algebra. Four fifth grade students participated in the McMillan Magnet Center Math Competition in Omaha. They did great!

6th grade students have taken time to study the 7 Habits of Successful People. We have learned to be responsible for our own actions, to take ownership in our work, set short term and long term goals, prioritize work that needs to be accomplished, listen to understand others, teamwork and leadership. It has been a great learning experience.

One of the most exciting times of the year for a child is Christmas. Getting gifts is exciting. However, **giving** gifts is exciting too! The 5th & 6th grade classes worked with the Christian Church in Elmwood on Operation Santa. We purchased, wrapped and donated gifts for children in our community. What a wonderful time of the year! It is so good to give and help others!!

MATH INTERVENTION ELEMENTARY PHYSICAL EDUCATION Curt Backemeyer

Elmwood-Murdock has begun a Math Intervention program entitled "Math Advantage" this school year at the Elementary School. This program is currently serving 23 students as a supplement to regular math instruction in grades k-6. Students qualify for the "Do the Math" curriculum based on Measures of Academic Performance (MAPs) scores which are given in the fall, winter, and spring. The curriculum consists of 13 modules ranging from basic number concepts to fractions and presents many hands-on activities along with alternative

strategies to help improve math skills. Progress is monitored through assessments at the end of each lesson in addition to assessments at the beginning, middle, and end of each module.

In elementary Physical Education this year we have been utilizing a SPARK curriculum and have presented various activities to promote movement and fitness along with parachute and manipulative units for grades k-2. Grades 3-6 have participated in volleyball, football, flying disc, aerobic games, and chasing/fleeing units.

Emphasis on the importance of staying active and being aware of proper nutrition is made on a regular basis. We often discuss which muscles are being utilized and strengthened with specific activities, along with the benefits of including aerobic exercise to strengthen the most important muscle, the heart.

We have also begun a Walk/Jog Club for elementary students in grades 2-6. Students may walk in the gym from 7:50 – 8:05 a.m. daily and may also walk during recess times. We normally have at least 15-20 students walking/jogging each morning and have several students who have already reached the 10-mile and 25-mile clubs!

SPECIAL EDUCATION READING ADVANTAGE Keri Hogue

This year, in Special Education, we are always doing many different activities and approaching learning in a variety of ways. With reading, we continue to use the "Sidewalk" series to support the students in the classroom. The curriculum is designed to match the concepts that are being taught in the regular education classroom which helps connect the content and strengthens their knowledge and skills in the areas of vocabulary, reading, and

writing.

New to us this year is the “Do the Math” curriculum we are using to help build a strong foundation of basic math concepts. It has a wonderful hands-on approach, and from my experience, the students really enjoy the activities and are excited to do the next lesson. We will continue to also address the other basic skills of Math which include time and money in functional ways to make sure it is meaningful and generalized into their daily lives. One way we accomplished this goal was taking a walking field trip down to the local convenience store to purchase an item of their choice. Each student had the opportunity to budget and be in charge of their own transaction at the register. It was a great experience, and on our way back, they were already discussing when and where we can do it again.

Finally, one concept I made sure to implement this year for all of my students is reading an “I Statement” as they leave my room every day. An “I Statement” is simply a positive, forward-thinking sentence that helps them keep a positive, healthy mindset whether it be in the classroom or daily lives. It is posted on my door, and they read it out loud as they leave my room. The students really enjoy this more than what I envisioned, so it is obviously something they value. Some examples of the “I Statements” I post are: “I can train my brain to do it!” “I am responsible for the choices I make.” “When I practice, I see great results!” and “I am capable of doing difficult things.” Overall, it has reminded me, as an educator, that in the midst of making sure students have necessary skill sets for their daily lives of reading, writing, and math, it is imperative and sometimes even more impacting to have a positive mindset in which to learn and grow those basic skills. That is accomplished with first establishing and positively reminding

ourselves we have the power within us to meet those academic goals. My first “I Statement” for this upcoming 2019 will be: “I believe in myself and my abilities.” Therefore, may you also approach your 2019 as a new year of new opportunities with your amazing abilities and a positive mindset as well.

FOURTH/FIFTH GRADE SPECIAL EDUCATION Morgan Manley

This year we are being very hands on with our learning. So far this year my students have learned a variety of math topics, such as subtracting using a number line, adding two digit numbers with regrouping, and telling time to the five minute mark on an analog clock. I have been utilizing several interactive math games to enhance our learning by using physical movement, technology, and gamification. We use the smart board in many of our lessons to enhance our learning and create college and career ready individuals. Moving forward in our math, we will continue to integrate technology and build off of our current skills. We will be working on adding 3 digit numbers, telling time to the minute on an analog clock and using different strategies to subtract.

I have also been using the Reading Street Sidewalks curriculum in my classroom to meet students needs. We are using the English Language Development Readers to assist with the skills needed to find the characters, setting, and plot of a story. Moving into next year, we will build off of these skills to determine the problem and resolution of our stories. Students have not only been meeting their A.R. goals in my class, but excelling!

Some behaviors we are currently working on with multiple students are how to appropriately react to situations. We are using social stories to teach replacement behaviors

for the undesired behaviors that are being displayed. I have been using social stories from the Watson Institute that are pre-made, but I am able to adjust each story to fit the needs of the students. We will continue to work on these skills throughout the year as they are needed, to best help our students.

I have also been servicing many of my students in the general education classroom this year. Most students are learning the on level curriculum with their peers and I have been using a push-in method to assist in the classroom, as opposed to pulling students out for instruction. Several students will then come to my room during study hall for additional instruction in the areas where I am in the classroom with them.

TITLE ONE READING ADVANTAGE Susan Oliva

As a Title One reading teacher, I get to enjoy seeing and hearing students master new reading challenges. Watching and guiding young readers on the road to reading success is definitely rewarding. Students show success in many different areas. Some may be working on phonemic awareness/ alphabetic understandings, letter identification/ formation exercises, or letter/ sound correspondence activities. Others may be working on spelling, guided reading, story retelling, comprehension strategies or fluency practice. There are so many components to master when learning to read. Students work to build mastery in each lesson. Whether reading gains are big or small, we celebrate them all! Kindergarten and first grade Reading Advantage students get additional practice in letter sounds, spelling, word identification and oral reading. Older students practice reading fluency and vocabulary. Students graph their reading rate and marvel at how much reading improves with repeated practice.

FAMILY READING NIGHT

Susan Oliva

Our theme this year for family reading night was "The Magical World of Books." We had a great attendance. Children were able to hear some wonderful stories with a magic theme and were able to watch and learn how to perform some magic tricks.

One of our books was entitled "The Magician's Hat" by Malcolm Mitchell. This book taught children that the library is filled with books that can help them become whatever they want to be. Reading has great power. The Astonishing Averil Hogue and The Grand and Glorious Grace Jacobson read this book and shared several magic tricks. The magical spoons awed everyone. Children learned how to make a rubber band jump from two fingers to the other two fingers. "The Magician's Secret" by Zachary Hyman was read by Madison, the Magnificent, Ashlock. In this book a little boy is entertained by his Grandpa's "tall tales". Are the stories true or not? Grandpa keeps his stories hidden in his Magic Story Chest. Madison showed us some cool tricks with paper circles. She cut paper circles in half and magically made bigger circles! She was even able to make a penny disappear. Magic!

The Amazing Alex Beno shared the book "Milo's Hat Trick" by Jon Agee. Poor Milo can't find a rabbit for his hat trick so he settles for a bear. How does a bear fit into a hat? It's easy. You just pretend that your bones are made of rubber. It's a secret the bear learned from the rabbit. After this funny book, Alex showed everyone the jumping paper clip trick. I'm not sure, but I think the classroom that this trick was performed in is still finding paper clips to this day. It was lots of fun to practice this trick.

Before students went home, they were able to pick out several gently used books to add to their own libraries. They also received a baggie with a "magic trick."

Many teachers were great help with all these tricks. Family Reading Night could not happen without all their assistance. The FCCLA students made cookies that magically disappeared. Thank you all for your help. And thank you parents and students for attending this event. Reading opens the door to lots of magical adventures

SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST Rhonda Towle

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) in public schools work with children who have communication impairments. These can include children who have spoken and written language disorders, difficulty producing sounds, stuttering, as well as cognitive-communication disorders. Communication can even include social skills. Each child is unique, and being able to work with a wide age-range of children and families makes each day unique and overall rewarding.

Parents often wonder if their child's communication is typically developing. There are a number of factors that SLPs and early childhood educators can look to determine if speech-language services are warranted. Early intervention leads to better results. Do not wait to get help. Free services are available to infants and toddlers as well. If you suspect your child could benefit from an early childhood evaluation please contact Trisha Nichelson (994-2125) and she can help guide you through the process of early intervention if needed.

To learn more about communication impairments, including tips on how to stimulate speech and language development, please visit the

American-Speech-Language Hearing Association's website at www.asha.org. There is a wealth of information regarding all types of communication impairments including tips on identifying signs of speech and language disorders.

LIBRARY NEWS JoDee Paulsen

I have learned so much being the Library Media Specialist for this district. I have seen reluctant readers grow to become lifelong readers and I have seen very strong readers fail to love to read. Many times I have been asked what parents can do at home to instill a love or passion for reading and while I know I do not have all the answers, I have a few suggestions:

- ◆ **Read together.** When families take the time to read together they experience something together that shows the importance of the task. It doesn't have to be a long chapter book every night. You can read a favorite picture book together or a newspaper article.
- ◆ **Make time for reading.** As a mom myself, I know how hard it is to get homework done, make supper, do our chores and still find time to read every night. Something that works for our family is when I am cooking supper, my boys read. Sometimes my older two will take turns reading to the youngest, sometimes the youngest has books where he can read the pictures but they all drop their distractions and read. I enjoy the quiet time and the boys get their reading done. A win for all of us.
- ◆ **Model reading.** Again, I know our lives are busy but when children see adults reading it shows that it has an importance outside of school. Read something you enjoy: a magazine, a newspaper, or even a children's book.
- ◆ **Allow students to read with their passion.** It sounds like a simple one, but when we make reading a job-it becomes something we have to do instead of something we choose to do. Make independent reading time their choice and take an interest in what they are reading. Ask them what the story is about and listen to their response.
- ◆ **Celebrate small goals as well as major reading accomplishments.** We have a great program available for our

students in first through eighth grade with Accelerated Reading. This program allows us to track our students' comprehension and gives us a tool for recognizing and rewarding students who choose to read.

Use this program to set small goals for your child and see what they are reading. If you would like more information about Accelerated Reader and how you can track their progress from home, please feel free to contact me:

jpaulsen@emknights.org or you may call me at either building.

BUSINESS

Jacob Shaffer

Accounting I

Throughout the course, students have been learning the "language of business": accounting. Students have gained experience in accounting by journalizing and posting transactions to special journals, preparing financial statements, and completing the other steps of the accounting cycle. By focusing on a service business organized as a proprietorship and a merchandising business organized as a corporation, students have gained insight into a broad range of accounting concepts. In November, students also had the opportunity to participate in the Stock Market Challenge at UNL's Innovation Campus sponsored by Junior Achievement. During the simulated event, students worked as a team to make investments in companies as they analyzed news events and stock trends.

Accounting II

Accounting II builds upon what students learned in Accounting I (Accounting I is a prerequisite). The concepts in this course provide more depth to what was learned the previous school year and delve into various types of accounting, such as departmentalized, corporation, and management accounting. This course furthermore prepares students for accounting and business courses in college. In November,

students also had the opportunity to participate in the Stock Market Challenge at UNL's Innovation Campus sponsored by Junior Achievement. During the simulated event, students worked as a team to make investments in companies as they analyzed news events and stock trends.

Critical Issues

As seniors, students take this course to develop career-readiness skills and create a senior project in the spring. At the beginning of the quarter, students learned the importance of community service and helping others. Students have since transitioned into researching colleges and careers and constructing job application materials. After creating and revising the job application materials, students have the privilege of participating in a mock job interview with a member of the community. In the spring, students will learn concepts related to taxation and meeting management and create and present their senior project.

Entrepreneurship

At the beginning of the semester, students first learned the risks involved with being an entrepreneur and the strengths of well-known, successful entrepreneurs. From those moments, students have been developing a business plan of their own aspirations. While gaining knowledge about various forms of business ownerships, economics, and marketing, students have created parts of their business plan, which will be finished at the end of the school year.

Personal Finance

This course covers a wide range of financial topics. At the beginning of the course, students first learned the importance of setting short-term, medium-term, and long-term financial and life goals. Gaining an understanding of values and goals allows each student to begin outlining a budget for their current or fu-

ture situations. Students have also gained knowledge about savings, investments, and being a smart consumer. At the end of the course, students learn various economics standards, such as different types of economic systems and the concepts associated with supply and demand.

Senior English

In order to improve writing, reading, and speaking skills, this class heavily focuses on proper grammar for two-thirds of the school year and expands to focus on written communication for the last third of the school year. The grammar portion of the curriculum includes learning how to use the various parts of speech, commas, and punctuation in several situations. In the spring the students will take their grammar knowledge and apply it while writing.

COMPUTERS

Laura Rikli

Computer 7

Computer 7 students have been working towards improving their keyboarding technique, speed and accuracy throughout the semester. Students have been completing lessons through EduTyping and taking timed writing tests to gauge improvements in both their speed and accuracy. The 7th grade class also learns how to key, format, and proofread various business documents during the last few weeks of the semester.

Computer 8

Students have been learning basic computer terminology while also working on various projects using Microsoft Publisher, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and Google Drive (Docs, Drawings, Forms and Slides). They have also learned how to create and properly format various business documents such as tables of content, tabs, tables, outlines, and agendas. Units over coding and digital citizenship have also been infused.

Info Tech 1

The 9th grade class has spent the 1st semester working on assignments that apply basic and advanced features of Word & Excel. They have 'mastered' their skills in Word and Excel by applying the basic skills they learned in 7th and 8th grade and taking them to advanced levels with new tools and methods. Next semester in Info Tech 2 they will learn how to create a database and run queries & reports using Microsoft Access. They will also learn how to perform a mail merge by integrating Word & Access. Students will also learn basic and advanced features of Power Point. They will end the school year by working on several fun projects in Adobe Photoshop.

Digital Design & Media

This semester students have been creating multimedia projects using the Adobe Creative Suite software. Students began the year by learning advanced design tools in Adobe Photoshop. We have recently been creating videos in Adobe Premiere Pro while using Adobe After Effects to edit the videos with animated video, background and text effects. Next semester the students will build websites with Wix, create animations in Adobe Animate and Fireworks, and learn how to create artistic illustrations using Adobe Illustrator.

Adult Living/Personal Finance

In this quarter class, the seniors have been learning about the skills necessary for financial independence after high school. Topics covered in this class are: transportation, housing, budgeting & consumerism, credit, and insurance. Students are engaged through various projects such as housing & apartment search activities; paper vs. spreadsheet budgets; generic vs. name brand consumerism activities; and understanding how to analyze credit card offers and credit reports.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Lance Steffen

American Government

American Government is a one-semester course for seniors that is split into quarter sections in each semester. An emphasis is placed on developing an understanding of national and state governments.

This first semester has been focused on the Constitutional Foundations of our government as well as the structure of our National Government. To do this, we have looked at theory of government as well as the role each of our three branches of government plays.

The second semester will focus on individual liberties given in the Bill of Rights as well as our political party system and what each party officially believes. The goal is to relate this information to students in a way that will be applicable to them as a voter in our society.

American Experience

This year in American Experience, we have divided the class into two separate sections, to better reflect student knowledge of American History and English/Music. Among the many topics we have discussed in the history segment of American Experience, the juniors have studied the European exploration and colonization of America. We also learned how we gained our independence and how slavery shaped our young nation before pushing our country into the Civil War by the end of the semester.

Second semester plans include a study of the Industrial Revolution in the US, the changing role of the US on the world's stage with America's role in WWI & WWII. We will also discuss the impact of the Great Depression, Civil Rights Era, and the cultural effects of the Cold War in America as well as

more contemporary topics like the War on Terror and more recent American History.

Cass County Government Day

Nearly 100 area students and teachers participated in this year's Cass County Government Day held in Plattsmouth on October 31, 2018. Elmwood-Murdock students were introduced to county officials and listened to a presentation in the morning. After the conclusion of the presentation, students learned more about the specific offices of the county government. Students observed the daily functions of their appointed office and were given the opportunity to ask questions related to that office and public service.

The Cass County American Legion Posts sponsor County Government Day each year to give students a firsthand look at the day to day operations of local government. Elmwood-Murdock students participating in County Government Day and their appointed office are listed below:

Ethan Clements	County Clerk
Nicole Wenzel	County Treasurer
Kylee Wilson	County Attorney
Sydney Anderson	Clerk of the District Court
Chloe Hosier	County Judge
Desirea Bouzek	County Court
Abe Vidaurre	Sheriff
Spencer Koehn	County Public Defender
Zane Rikli	Election Commissioner
Molly Felile	Emergency Management
Noah Willey	Commissioner District 1
Jakob Boucher	Commissioner District 2
Drake Spohr	Commissioner District 3
Alyssa Clossner	Commissioner District 4
Lauren Justesen	Commissioner District 5
Austin Boucher	Highway/Roads Superintendent

World History

Sophomores in World History are learning that while historical events are unique, they are often driven by similar repeated forces. The course identifies several cultures and civilizations throughout history as well as major achievements of those cultures along the way. As we discuss the history of the world, our major goal is to incorporate the stories of as many cultures around the world

as we can. This is a class devoted to the story of all of us and how we reached the modern age.

The first semester of World History focused on the Beginnings of Civilization, The First Age of Empires, Rome, and Cultures in Asia, Africa, and America. So far in the timeline of the world, we have reached roughly 500 CE. For the second semester, our goal is to discuss the major events associated with Islam and Eastern Conquerors, the Middle Ages in Europe contrasted with West African peoples, The Age of Exploration and the people involved, and finishing with the Enlightenment Period in Europe with a focus on social and ideological change associated with this time period.

Geography

Geography is a course offered to freshmen at Elmwood-Murdock. The freshmen are divided into two sections of this class, one taught by Mrs. Schmidt and the other with me. While we vary from time to time with content, the major focus of Geography is to answer essential questions of where a place is, what is so important about it, who lives there, and how are they the way they are today. We seek more than simply Physical Geography of a region, but also seek to incorporate the human aspects of a region.

So far in my section, we have studied Geography Basics, Earth's Features, The US & Canada, Latin America, and Oceania. The second semester will focus on Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Russia and other Asian Powers, and finally the geography of our Solar System.

ENGLISH Garrett Hall

It has been another fast and exciting semester in the English department here at Elmwood-Murdock high school. It is always great to get to know new students and parents at

the beginning of each year. I always enjoy taking on new challenges and working with students as we move forward in our exploration of English and literature.

I have freshman once again this year. It has been great fun getting to know a new group of students and having the opportunity to focus on writing skills and reading comprehension. The sophomores have been hard at work learning new vocabulary, sharpening their writing skills, and taking on the challenge of reading Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as we bring the semester to a close. As we head into the second semester we will be reading more class novels and learning the fundamentals of writing a research paper.

In AMEX the juniors are continuing to move through the history of American Literature. We just finished reading about Civil War Literature and at the start of the new semester we will read literature from the World War One time period. We will also have a few class novels (*The Great Gatsby* and *As I Lay Dying*) that we will be reading together.

The seniors that I have this year have been working hard in Composition and will be starting the challenging *Modern Fiction* class in the second semester. I have been very pleased with how hard all of the students have been working on their homework and classes this year and am happy to be a dual credit instructor for Southeast Community College.

Finally, I want to take a second and discuss the *Digital Communications* class. The class has been working very hard to broadcast all of our home varsity sporting events. In addition to the live sporting events the students have also been working to produce segments for the things that have been happening around the community and the school.

I am very happy to have the support of students and the community in our endeavors and I look forward to the coming semester.

LANGUAGE ARTS Heather Bornemeier

This semester has brought about many exciting experiences for all of the classes that I have the opportunity to teach.

English 7

The 7th graders have been busy throughout the semester working on various parts of literature and writing. We kicked off the school year by working through a literature unit that focused on *Facing Danger*. In this unit of study we read many short stories from our large literature text. Each story was accompanied by a specific project or assignment that specifically focused on a selected literary element. We have continued to work through additional units in our literature books. We also completed individual book projects where the students selected a book of their choice and created a unique project based on their book's entities. We also recently finished our first class novel, *The Westing Game*, a popular grade-level mystery. The students continuously focus on expanding their knowledge of grammar, writing, spelling and vocabulary skills each week through assigned practices. The 7th graders will also continue studying literature throughout the second semester in addition to continued writing practices and another individual book project.

English 8

The 8th graders have had a busy first semester focusing on many parts of Language Arts, one of which includes extensive literature practices that also include various styles of writing. The 8th graders began the year by reading a class novel, *My Brother Sam is Dead*, a historical fiction selection that is centered around the Revolutionary

War time period. The 8th graders also completed an individual book project during the first quarter. To complete the 8th graders busy Language Arts routine, we also continue to have weekly grammar, spelling and vocabulary practices through specific assignments and assessments. The second semester will bring about a more rigorous writing schedule and an increase in literature focus.

English 9

The 9th graders have had a full semester focusing on specific grammar and writing skills, literature practices and weekly spelling and vocabulary assessments. The 9th graders have embarked on reading/acting the play *Romeo & Juliet*. The study of Shakespeare broadened their horizons of literature and has exposed them to a whole new language to interpret and analyze. The 9th graders also completed a semester-long book project where they were assessed through writing summaries and oral presentations. The class also read *The Odyssey* this semester. In the second semester, the 9th graders will complete another book project, a science fiction unit and an extensive Holocaust unit. The class continues to make advancements with technology as we grow as digital citizens.

Speech 10

During this semester-long course, the 10th graders have learned to effectively write and deliver many types of speeches. The class has completed many informal and formal speeches with a wide range of expectations. The class has learned to conduct extensive research in composing their speech scripts, as well as the importance of multiple rehearsals and peer evaluations. The Speech class has also learned to adapt to many styles of rubrics. The class is currently finishing the course by writing and delivering individual persuasive speeches. In the spring, I will bring a new group of 10th graders into the Speech classroom, as the first semester's

group will transition into a different class.

Journalism

This small class of 11th-12th graders has been diligently working to take, gather, and organize a wide range of photos to highlight all of Elmwood-Murdock's activities and organizations. This motivated group is well underway in the process of designing the 2018-2019 yearbook. These students focus their attention on meeting deadlines, using creativity and marketing their product on a daily basis.

SCIENCE

Laura Stock

The Physical and Earth Science classes at Elmwood-Murdock Junior/Senior High have been keeping the laboratory and classrooms busy this year.

The 8th grade Earth Science classes completed units on experimental design, matter and measurement, the solar system, the earth-moon system and finally, Earth's atmosphere, and weather. During October and November, the students learned about the solar system. We designed experiments to explore the greenhouse effect and compared the greenhouse effect on Venus and Earth. In December, we learned about air pressure by conducting experiments like crushing cans and puffing up Peeps. Our next units of study will include the weather, the Earth's structure, minerals and rocks, fossils, plate tectonics, earthquakes and volcanoes.

The 9th grade class, Intro to Physics/Earth Science, began the year with a review of scientific methods and experimentation. Then we studied the life cycle of stars, galaxies and the origins of our universe. During this unit, we designed experiments to test ultraviolet light absorption. Then we learned how

to describe motion graphically, pictorially and mathematically, using PASCO motion sensor probe ware. We wrapped up the semester exploring Newton's Laws of Motion and forces. Next semester, we will design a mini car powered by a balloon that can travel at least 5 meters. We will also study the history of the Earth, energy, wave behavior, thermal energy, natural resources and climate.

Chemistry is sometimes difficult because we often learn about things that we can't physically observe, like protons or electrons. The Chemistry classes began the year studying matter and its observable physical properties, such as density. Students used this knowledge to experimentally determine the percentage of sugar in Pepsi and Mountain Dew. It is always fun to see the look on students' faces at the end of the lab when we actually measure out 77 grams of sugar, which is the amount of sugar in a 20 oz. bottle of Mountain Dew. Students also explored other physical properties of matter and utilized these properties to separate mixtures. The highlight of the semester was the student-led experiment to determine a way to remove elemental iron from Total® brand cereal. Every year I am blown away by the creativity of our students in solving problems and this year's juniors were no exception. We then ventured into the sub-atomic world of protons, neutrons and electrons and completed the semester by designing and constructing element ornaments for our Chemis"tree."

In Physics, we kicked off the year studying vectors and solving a variety of problems involving vector addition of forces. We then studied motion, particularly velocity and acceleration. We conducted an experiment to determine if reaction time is related to gender or to time spent playing video games by using our kinematics equations. We learned about projectile motion and used our knowledge to work on

three different versions of “hit the ball in the cup.” We finished the semester studying Newton’s Laws of Motion and solving a variety of problems using PASCO force sensors and smartphones apps.

BIOLOGY/LIFE SCIENCE ANATOMY Justin Moline

Biology classes have focused on understanding the scientific method, conversions, cells and genetics. Students studied cell structures, energy, reproduction, differentiation, DNA structure and its importance for controlling cellular activity. Inquiry skills have been practiced during investigations associated with enzyme activity, cellular transport, cellular energy, and genetics.

The 7th grade Life Science classes have discussed the scientific process, compounds, cells, and organ systems of the body. Students have focused on the classification, organization, and relationships within these important concepts. The unit regarding cells included an understanding of sub-cellular structures, cellular functions, and exploratory labs using microscopes. We are currently investigating the organization, functions, and relationships of the different organ systems in the human body. Inquiry skills have been the focus of lab investigations for heart rate during different activities, measuring and comparing nutrients provided by certain foods, and lung capacity comparisons and analysis. Other topics that will be discussed throughout the school year include DNA and genetics, ecosystems and environmental studies, adaptations and relationships, behavior, and the classification system.

Anatomy examines the structures and functions of each organ system of the human body, and the complex interactions necessary to keep the body functioning properly. The

first semester has included studies of cells, tissues, the integumentary system, and the skeletal system. The objectives of anatomy include gaining a fundamental knowledge of the location of different parts of the body, understanding the functions necessary to maintain homeostasis, examining the effects of external factors on the body, and investigating relationships between body structures. Research topics have included information regarding diseases and disorders, and unique characteristics of different body systems and structures. We are currently discussing the skeletal system, including, microscopic features, location of different bones, comparing types and locations of joints, and understanding anatomical movements.

TECHNOLOGY Paul Dwyer

The school has completed another phase of our 1:1 implementation, which was the first refresh cycle of Macbook Airs and Chromebooks. This past fall we rolled out 34 new Macbooks and 35 new Chromebooks for students in grades 8 and 9. Students that come into high school receive a new Macbook to use until they graduate. We repurpose the older technology to students in grades PK-3, which allows for those students to have access to laptops for their various class centers and computer time.

The schools new website which was launched last year has become a “one stop shop” for all school related information. The site contains forms needed by parents, menus, calendars, news stories, and also daily updates of happenings in school via our “Live Feed”. Please visit the site at www.emknights.org. Along with our website, be sure to follow the Elmwood-Murdock twitter feed for the latest school information. Follow us @EMKnightsSchool.

The District is has continued with

great success to use striv.tv as the vehicle to stream various activities that are held at both the Murdock and Elmwood sites Striv.tv is a online streaming application, that allows us to stream our home athletic activities and also a few select other events. Please turn into our striv.tv channel for a listing of all events and also to view our live events. You can check it out at <http://striv.tv/channel/elmwood-murdock>.

A number of other items are in either in the implementation phase or investigation phase at school for technology. The Business Manager, Roxanne Kastens, is testing a cloud-based document storage for the District’s accounting software. This might allow us to store our schools important documentation to the cloud and be accessible to whoever might need it. In the long run, this will be cost saving procedure and also a time saving efficiency. The District is also looking into ways to increase bandwidth the Elementary site over the summer. This might entail improving our wireless point to point between the two buildings, so possible have a fiber optic connection between the two sites.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE Lisa Hynes

Foods, Nutrition and Wellness

Students have been busy learning about nutrition and cooking in the labs! The semester began learning about why we eat the foods we do and the meaning of foods to different cultures. We then studied about digestion and how our body converts the foods we eat into the nutrients that sustain our bodies. We also had an in-depth unit about carbohydrates. To prepare for cooking labs the students learned about kitchen and food safety. They learned basic kitchen skills and about the equipment used in cooking. Our current unit is baking. The

students have been busy learning about quick breads, yeast breads, and cookies.

Life Skills/C4C

Our goal in C4C is to introduce students to the world of work. Students have explored 16 different career clusters. Each student researched and wrote a paper, after picking a career that interests them. In addition, students created a resume and cover letter. Our semester ended with a unit on Personal Finance. We covered saving & investing, credit cards, checking accounts, & paychecks. In the personal finance unit, students learned to read a paycheck stub, keep a checkbook register and balance a checking account.

Parenting

We began the semester learning about family structure and function as well as the responsibilities of parenting. The parenting experience has been enhanced with the use of the school's Real Care Babies. Students participated in the Read Care Baby Think It Over simulation by parenting a life-like baby doll for 72 hours. Recently, we have followed the life-cycle from conception to birth. We finished the semester with a unit on child development and conducted activities at the EM Preschool for the 3 year olds.

Relationships 8th Grade

Students learn about themselves as we discuss self-concept, personality, values, and goals. We then take that foundation to explore how those characteristics impact relationships. We examine relationships with families, friends and peers. Some of the projects students complete include a Mandala, Role Tree, and a Goal Letter.

Exploratory FCS 7th Grade

Students in this exploratory class get a small taste of some of the different areas of FCS curriculum. We stitched up a pillowcase learning about the sewing machine along the

way. We practiced some basic food preparation skills in the foods lab while making healthy snack choices.

FCCLA

Students in Family Career & Community Leaders of America have been very active this fall! Students attended District Leadership Conference in Falls City. We provided the cookies and helped at Family Reading Night at the Elementary. Our chapter hosted a Red Cross Blood Drive in November. SPOT team officer, Kate Zakaras, has also given two workshops to the student body this semester. The group has also created no-sew blankets and collected gifts for a low-income grade school. Students are busy working on Students Taking Action and Recognition projects to present in January at our District competition.

MATH John Hill

Last year, as part of the continuing process in switching from the NESa to the ACT standards, we instituted the use of I-Books for juniors taking Algebra 2. There were many advantages in doing this. One of the first advantages was no longer could students "lose" their I-Book or have their books "fall" apart. It could always be loaded again from Schoology. In addition, the scope and sequence of topics covered could easily be adjusted to the make-up of the students in the particular class. In addition, having multimedia available could make it so if a student missed class, there were still instructional videos, approved of by the teacher, available to them. Although there was constant re-evaluation and upgrade, the project proved to be a good addition to meeting the requirements for graduation. Algebra 2 now goes through 7 different I-Books during the school year.

This year, we are enhancing a topic

within the Pre-Calculus curriculum. Starting 2nd semester, students will have an I-Book on combinatorics (counting techniques) and probability. Although Pre-Calculus has sections covering those topics, the depth and sequence from the book made the assumption that those topics were covered previously. This was not the case. So the decision was made to enhance the section by using an I-Book. This will provide the depth and scope required, which in turn will allow for more students to gain a better understanding.

Math Day Participation

The top math students from Elmwood-Murdock continued their strong tradition of excellence and participation at the 29th Annual UNL Math Day held on November 19, 2018 at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. All the students participated in the PROBE (Problems Requiring Original and Brilliant Effort) test. The students also participated in Quiz Bowl, which followed the PROBE exam. Approximately 1200 students and 105 schools from across the state participate in this event each year.

This year the PROBE team finished 4th in their class.

Math Day participants – Cody Bornemeier, Hayden Ernst, Caleb Jones, Andy Meyer, Ethan Clements, Chloe Hosier, Norina Higuchi, Abraham Vidaurre, Rylee Hogue, and Maggie Richter.

MUSIC Gary Grinvalds

Elementary

The elementary has performed for the community three times so far this school year: Grandparent's Day, Veteran's Day, and the Christmas Concert.

In addition to preparing for concerts in class, we have been working on learning to read music, being creative with our own music, and learn-

ing to play instruments. In this case, we have been mostly getting familiar with ukuleles in grades 3-6.

Junior High

We had several students in the junior high selected to attend the ECNC honor choir in Auburn: Riley Wilson, Max Wynegar, Jordan Vogler, Karly Anderson, Victoria McNaught, Nathan Miller, Will Platt, Ava Kennedy, Alexis Borne-meier, Mia Rikli, Sam Clements, Lily Pope, and Angela Brockhoff. Those able to attend had a day full of rehearsal before a final performance that evening. It was a very informative and productive day.

The junior high had their first opportunity to perform for the public with the Christmas concert. In addition to practicing music for performances, we have been spending time working on learning musical literacy skills. We have especially been focusing on solfege, note identification, rhythm reading, and key identification.

High School

Several high schoolers also travelled to Auburn for the ECNC honor choir: Kate Zakaras, Spencer Koehn, Gus Pope, Rylee Hogue, Ethan Clements, Abraham Vidarre, Justin Wolph, Maggie Richter, Tessa Robertson, Molly Feile, Noah Arent, Katie Hansen, and Sophie Frank.

In addition to ECNC Honor Choir, we had three students selected for the NMEA All State Honor Choir: Noah Arent, Molly Feile, and Gus Pope. They had the good fortune of spending three days rehearsing with more than four hundred of Nebraska's best high school singers under the direction of Z. Randall Stroope.

The high school choir first performed on Veteran's Day, but had a longer performance at the Christmas concert. Fortunately, we have

secured the help of a part-time accompanist: Nancy Havranek. With her help, the high school choir has been learning music quickly and effectively.

We have also been working on musical literacy skills with observable growth in note identification, key identification, and solfege recognition. We look forward to another great semester with more emphasis on building vocal technique.

BAND **Michael Hanson**

This year has been a very musical year so far. We have maintained numbers in the Elementary and Jr. High Band, displayed very good test scores, and performed well at Applejack to show for our continued time and work. Beginning with the 5th Grade Band; this year we have 24 aspiring, eager students enrolled in the 5th grade band and 22 in the 6th Band. We have almost a perfect balance of instrumentation with the elementary 5-6th band, which will help to produce a mature sound with the band in the future. The elementary has performed at two concerts including Grandparent's Day and the Winter Concert. We are excited how the elementary have improved this year and look forward to their future in the program. Thanks to the students that practice after school.

The Jr. High Band has maintained a solid number of 40 students with a continued balanced instrumentation. We have had several performances this year and continue to prepare for various community and school related performances. We are spending a great deal of time working on improving the students ability to read and to produce a high quality tone and adjust their sound to make the best sound possible without teacher intervention, which is a skill that takes a great deal of higher order thinking skills. This year we are focusing on sectional

work and repetition to develop individual skills while in the large ensemble setting. Several students auditioned for the Wayne Honor Band and we will post results to the website.

The High School Band continues to play at a high level despite the smaller numbers. We are 32-student strong and have a very good balance as far as instrumentation. In April of 2018 the Band earned a Superior (Plaque) at District Contest. We have competed several times and earned 4th place at the Applejack Parade, we placed 17 out of 35 in Class C at the Harvest of Harmony Parade. We have been and are preparing for various concert band performances including the Veteran's Day performance, Winter Concert and our upcoming Fundraising Concert in February with a "Night at the Movies" for the concert.

Individually, we are continuing to see many students shine musically as well. Many students auditioned or will for the Wayne State Honor Band, Class C State Honor Band, and ECNC Honor Band.

Thank you to the school board for approving our annual budget and repairing many school instruments for the school year. We purchased a new baritone and two French horns over the past 3 years. In the next couple of years we will be replacing older school owned instruments to modernize our instrument inventory which on average the instruments are over 30 years old. We thank all of the community support of the Band program and will continue to strive for excellence in music and academics in the Elmwood-Murdock Band Program.

SPECIAL EDUCATION **Nichole Justesen**

Special education is specially designed instruction that addresses the unique needs of a student eligible to

receive special education services. Special education is provided at no cost to parents and includes the related services a student needs to access her/his educational program. In grades 10-12, we begin to transition students for life after high school. Greater emphasis is placed on education goals and their impact on post-secondary plans, self-advocacy and time management skills. Students with disabilities require self-advocacy characteristics and skills for a successful transition from high school to post-secondary education. Developing self-understanding will help student's plan goals for themselves. Students with exceptionalities should reflect on their situations which will thereby develop self awareness. Students who gain and develop a greater understanding of their own needs gain confidence to recognize their abilities. This will allow students to set realistic goals for themselves and provide direction in their post-secondary plans. It is important for students to be able to voice their opinion, address concerns, as well as, develop learning strategies for setting goals, time management and problem solving.

JUNIOR HIGH SPECIAL EDUCATION Peggy Guenther

Students from grades 7,8, and 9 with specific learning disabilities are given direct, specialized instruction and academic support and assistance with homework. Instruction may be administered in small groups or individually. The goal is to teach students metacognitive skills that will empower them to achieve success. You can help your student continue to practice at home using these tips:

Tips for helping with schoolwork

- Show an interest in your child's homework. Inquire about the subjects and the work to be done. Ask questions that require answers longer than one or two words.

- Help your child organize homework materials before beginning.
 - Establish a regular time with your child to do homework-developing a schedule helps avoid procrastination.
 - Find a specific place for your child to do homework that has lots of light, quiet, and plenty of work space.
 - Encourage your child to ask questions and search for answers, taking the time to figure out correct answers.
 - Make sure your child backs up answers with facts and evidence.
 - Practice school-taught skills at home.
 - Relate homework to your child's everyday life. For instance, teach fractions and measurements as you prepare a favorite food together.
 - Be a role model-take the opportunity to read a book or newspaper or write a letter while your child studies.
- Praise your child for both the small steps and big leaps in the right direction.

(LD Basics Parent Ti[s. (2018). Retrieved November 28, 2018, from www.ldonline.org)

SPECIAL EDUCATION LIFE SKILLS April Bacon

The life skills/transition program is back in full swing this year. This year the students helped out at the People's City Mission. They spent hours sorting Christmas gifts to be given out for Christmas gifts for families in need.

We provide a strong classroom management program and structure to increase student academic achievement by decreasing behavior concerns. Although the classroom is very structured we provide flexibility to help the students feel comfortable and safe at school. Many times setting expectations and having a safe zone for students creates a positive learning environment in other parts of the building.

This year the life skills program is using two different interventions for math and language arts. Both intervention programs blend per-

sonalized, online learning with teacher directed instruction to empower struggling learners to close the learning gap between themselves and their peers. The hope would be for some students to mainstream back into the general education classes. For the students who are not able to do so, our goal is to teach students at their current educational level to help them with confidence and motivation to learn.

Life skills looks at a variety of different areas. This includes self-help skills but also looks at assisting students to access their community around them. Some students are also learning daily living skills such as washing and folding laundry, grocery shopping, cooking and other life skills. We have visited the grocery store many times during the first semester. The students use recipes to make grocery lists and design a budget before going to the grocery store. Every Friday they use the groceries to make a snack following a weekly recipe.

SPANISH CLASS Manuel Camina

“BIENVENIDOS A ESPAÑOL.” This year we have four different levels of Spanish. We have one big group of Spanish I, and a really small one. We are learning all the basic stuff, how verbs work in Spanish, how to describe someone, school subjects and items we use and how to express what we like and what we don't like.

In Spanish II we have three groups. We get a little deeper in Spanish grammar and we have been learning “the boot” verbs, the past tenses, and the direct and indirect objects. We are learning not only language, but things people do in Spanish speaking countries.

Spanish III classes are mixed this year with Spanish 2. Most of the time we are speaking just Spanish

and they can have conversations with me. We even enjoy the music about el Dia de los Muertos, and we play games like "Manzanas con Manzanas" or "Password" create a TV show. We had the chance to go to a "Flamenco dancing show" in Omaha. This group really shows they want to learn and use a new language and that makes that class really easy to enjoy.

We also have three groups of exploratory Spanish. Seventh graders take it and it is fun. We are learning basic vocabulary, playing bingo and hangman, and researching about Spanish speaking countries. During the first weeks we had a transition class where we all learned a lot.

ART **Rebecca Campbell**

This semester has been lots of fun in our various art classes. So many talented students here at EM make for some pretty awesome ART! This year students in all classes created an online portfolio to show off their art. Middle School-High School student art can also be viewed on Artsonia.com. This has proven to be a huge success and allows family and friends of art students to see what great work their children have done! We have also displayed our art at ESU#3, which is another great opportunity to showcase our talented art students. We will participate in Youth Art Month in March and have art on display in downtown Lincoln along with the other schools in our conference. All of these opportunities continue to help our art program grow and are excellent ways to get our art out in the community. Continue reading to see what each class has been working on.

Art 8

Students learned the basics of art and focus on art elements. We work with all types of media so students can experiment and learn new tech-

niques. We do a lot of critiques both on student work as well as other artists. This is only a quarter long class for them, but we get a lot of fun things accomplished during that time.

Art I

Students have gotten a little more in depth with various art media. We've done acrylic painting, tempera painting, colored pencil, graphite and oil pastel. This has been an AMAZING class to work with and I'm so excited to see what they produce each and every project.

Art II

Art II has also worked with various art media but has gotten more in depth with each of them and focuses more on mastery. Art history and more in depth critiquing is a bigger focus than previous years. Students have learned about various paints and drawing media.

Art III

Students focus greatly on art history and learning about different genres of art. Students utilize previous knowledge and skills to complete each project which are based on the genre they are studying. Art III students have the chance to choose from a variety of media and techniques for their projects. Projects leave room for many interpretations and creativity allowing students the opportunity to showcase their strengths.

Independent Art

Students have worked diligently on furthering their artistic skills in their choice of media. They have completed many choice projects based on their own strong points. Students have also created portfolios to showcase their work.

7-12 HEALTH PHYSICAL EDUCATION Aaron Pryor

Our yearly goal in the Health and

Physical Education Department at Elmwood-Murdock Junior/Senior High School is to provide students the opportunities to gain the knowledge, skills, and tools to be physically fit individuals as they move on into everyday life. We aim to do this by providing learning opportunities through a variety of classes.

These classes include: 7th Grade PE/Health, 8th Grade PE/Health, PE II, PE III, and PE IV.

For the 2018-19 school year, the Junior High students are spending time in both the gym as well as the classroom. In the Health classroom, the 7th Grade students have been covering topics such as: Your Total Health, Health Risks/Behaviors, Decision Making, Goal Setting, Skeletal/Muscular Systems, Creating Fitness Plans, Nutrition, and Meal Planning among other things. The 8th Grade students have been covering topics related to: Mental and Emotional Health, Managing Stress, How Tobacco Affects the Body, Tobacco Use and Society, The Respiratory System, as well as Tobacco Refusal Skills. The 8th Grade students have also been spending some time each week in the Fitness Center. This provides them an opportunity to learn about various weightlifting exercises as well as the proper technique needed to perform them correctly.

In the gym, Junior High students participate in a variety of daily warm-up activities from dynamic stretching to plyometrics and agility. Students are expected to fully participate and give effort no matter the activity. Cooperative team skills, strategic communication, and sportsmanship skills are emphasized in the large group setting. Students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of units. Throughout the course of a unit, we will practice the skills needed to successfully participate along with

the rules, scoring, etc. Units included: volleyball, ultimate football, team handball, bowling, pillo pollo, soccer, basketball, wiffleball, badminton, and pickleball among others. This wide range of exposure allows the students to find games and activities they prefer and provides them with the knowledge and skills to fully participate in the activity moving forward.

For the 2018-19 school year at the High School level, the three PE classes offered cover a wide range of fitness concepts, games, activities, and weight training. Again, our goal is to provide these students with the opportunities to explore a variety of physical activity to help them become physically knowledgeable individuals as they move forward with their lives. All of these classes participate in daily warm-up activities that focus on agility, strength, flexibility, and speed.

Our PE II class participates in a variety of both sports based as well as team cooperative games. This class is also building on the introductory weight training skills that they've learned in the past as we are progressing through a weight lifting program in the Fitness Center twice a week. This balance provides a well-rounded introductory physical education experience at the High School level.

The PE III class provides students the opportunities to learn about and participate in a variety of individual, team, and lifetime sports. The curriculum aims to introduce games to students and gives them the chance to practice the skills they will need to participate successfully in the game or culminating activity. With daily warm-up activities and a weekly trip to the Fitness Center, we encourage the students to maximize their learning/activity time to the best of their abilities.

PE IV is our Strength and Conditioning classes that takes place in the Fitness Center. Students participate on a daily basis in our Knight Weightlifting program that is tailored to meet each student's individual needs. Students are responsible for tracking progress on their daily log sheets as we move through our program. Core lifts such as: Bench Press, Squat, and Hang Clean are supplemented with auxiliary lifts to increase overall strength. One repetition maximums are tested multiple times throughout the school year to test our gains as well as helping us to identify deficiencies.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL SERVICES **Don Brothers**

As classes are winding down for the first semester everyone is working hard on projects, welds and building model houses.

The Building construction class has finished all of their drafting in class and are working on a scaled model house from their drafting plans. They have finished the framework and are now doing the hip style roof on the houses.

Welders are busy working on required test welds for college credit through Southeast Community college and working on various welding projects in the lab.

The Architectural Drafting students are using a Chief Architect program to design and build homes of various styles. They have design ranch homes, southwestern houses and beach houses just to name a few.

Our Technology 7 students have been busy this quarter building mousetraps cars and are currently building wooden shelves they designed in class. They have cut their materials, sanded and stained. They are currently in the middle of assembly and clear coating. They

should be bring home their projects this week

Finally the Technology 8 students finished their Drafting section of the class and are currently also working on their woods projects. They all have been doing a great job on their projects and will be bringing them home this week.

SOCIAL STUDIES **Lisa Schmidt**

The results are in... This fall students in grades 7-12 participated in the KFOR Student Vote. Students were able to cast their electronic ballot for US Senate, US House of Representatives, Governor, Secretary of State, Medicaid expansion and Lincoln's Mayoral term limits. The results of how the Elmwood-Murdock student body voted are as follows:

US Senate

Deb Fischer:	65%
Jane Raybould:	20%
Jim Schultz:	11%

District 1 US House of Representatives

Jeff Fortenberry:	69%
Jessica McClure:	27%

Governor – State of Nebraska

Bob Krist:	19%
Pete Ricketts:	78%

Secretary of State

Spencer Danner:	33%
Bob Evnen:	64%

Medicaid Expansion

For:	69%
Against:	26%

Mayor Term Limit (Lincoln)

For:	69%
Against:	27%

Eighth grade United States History worked in conjunction with their English class in an effort to use maps and historical research to support information about the historical fiction novels that they read. This is the first year the two departments have worked together to create an electronic product that showcases student learning. Students were introduced to GIS – Geographic Information Systems as a

way to tell a story. They used GIS to relate the location of places in their historical fiction novel to the story itself. Students communicated their understanding of the book using maps, text, research and images.

Seventh grade Civics and Economics has focused on the citizenship of our country. We have taken a look at the Bill of Rights and how that impacts us as citizens of the United States. Students created an Amendments to the Constitution pictorial timeline. We will continue to look at the government and break down each of the three branches. Second semester we will begin our study of economics.

The Geography Bee, for 7th and 8th grade, will be wrapping up during the month of January. We have had preliminary rounds and the members competing in the final school round are: Sam Clements, Nathan Miller, Will Platt, Garrett Pleiss, Samuel Cox, Haylee Josoff, Rylan Kastens and Reid Fletcher.

MATH

Eighth and ninth grade Algebra students have learned concepts such as: solving for a variable in multiple steps, linear equations, functions, function equations, problem solving, expressions and equations. Students have been reviewing and strengthening previously learned skills by completing a daily math minute or fraction sheet. Algebra students have done a tremendous job showing the variety of the concepts they have learned by being able to answer open-ended questions. Showing not only their aptitude for solving problems but writing problems and being able to decode what is asked of them.

JUNIOR HIGH MATH **Kim Tennial**

What a great year this has been so far! Students here at Elmwood-Murdock make teaching fun since

they are so well behaved and willing to learn. The math classes have been moving right along, learning and practicing many new skills. Since the standards changed last year, the curriculum for the junior high changed this year and is even more challenging than ever. Having taught for 43 years I have seen so many changes in the expectations for the students. What I used to teach in 9th grade general math is now taught at about the 4th grade. Our students have risen to the challenge and since they are so well-prepared coming into the junior high, it makes my job easier.

After state assessments we will be doing project-based math, right now we just concentrate on learning concepts and practicing those concepts. We did take a couple of days to craft in December and hopefully many of you received a craft from a junior high student. They also created a holiday card for one of our many past students currently serving in the military.

I really appreciate that fact that we have such great students. Thank you, parents, for all your support and raising these fine young ladies and gentlemen.

FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS OF AMERICA (FBLA) **Laura Rikli/Jacob Shaffer**

Our FBLA chapter has gotten off to a strong start this school year after returning this summer from the National Leadership Conference in Baltimore, Maryland. Students who competed in Baltimore were Sydney Anderson, Jac Clements, Payton Frahm, Katrina Hansen, Lauren Justesen, Sydney Kunz, Morgan Mills, and Faith Offner.

During the summer, our local chapter officers participated in a day of training at the high school to prepare for the school year. At this training, the students developed our

program of work, brainstormed ideas for chapter projects, prepared the FBLA bulletin board, and created flyers for the first day of school. Some of our chapter projects this year include recognizing and preserving Elmwood's history (Community Service Project), teaching students about the United States economy (American Enterprise Project), and partnering with the Lofte Community Theater (Partnership with Business Project).

During Elmwood's Holiday Extravaganza, the Community Service Project group created and ran three hayrack tours of historical sites in Elmwood. The students also interviewed community members and developed a living history video that incorporates residents sharing their memories of Elmwood. Other team events and projects for the state conference in April have also been underway to prepare for great competition in the spring.

The American Enterprise Project group recently conducted short lessons at the elementary with the sixth-grade students. The group taught enterprise-related concepts such as entrepreneurship, business forms and types, and marketing. Sixth-grade students also learned the importance of local businesses and had the opportunity to tour Stock Seed Farm on December 13 to learn about their business.

Some of our chapter members have had the opportunity to attend two different conferences this school year. At the end of September, our local officers and four other members traveled to Omaha to attend the state's Fall Leadership Conference. At this conference, our members were inspired and learned how to lead in our organization and school. At the end of November, some of our members traveled to Lincoln for UNL's Path to Success Conference, where they learned how to succeed in high school, college, and their future careers.

Another exciting part of this school year is that we have a local member serving as a state officer for Nebraska. Senior Morgan Mills campaigned for State Secretary during the April state conference and was elected by the state's FBLA members to serve during the 2018-2019 school year. Morgan has attended several conferences this year, including the National Fall Leadership Conference in Chicago, and has prepared presentations for those in attendance at some of the conferences. She has also spoken to state members about becoming more involved in FBLA at the Raymond Central and Dorchester area meetings in early November.

We are excited to continue developing future business leaders throughout the rest of the school year, and we are looking forward to competing in various conferences in the spring.

FCCLA Lisa Hynes

Students in Family Career & Community Leaders of America have been very active this fall! Students attended District Leadership Conference in Falls City. We provided the cookies and helped at Family Reading Night at the Elementary. Our chapter hosted a Red Cross Blood Drive in November. SPOT team officer, Kate Zakaras, has also given two workshops to the student body this semester. The group has also created no-sew blankets and collected gifts for a low-income grade school. Students are busy working on Students Taking Action and Recognition projects to present in January at our District competition.

SPANISH CLUB Manuel Camina

The same as other years, Elmwood-Murdock has a Spanish Club. Several kids save some of their free time to join us and share the culture

of Spanish speaking countries, enjoying movies with lots of nachos and salsa, and we have lots of ideas for this school year. So far we have visited a haunted house during Halloween, we had game nights, and for future meetings we will celebrate Navidad, do activities related to fútbol, learn how to dance salsa, go ice skating, and so many more fun things.

Check your calendars to see when we are having a meeting and feel free to join us. If you want to be part of the Spanish Club talk to our "oficiales" or any other member of El Club de Español, including Mr. Camina.

ONE-ACT PLAY PRODUCTION

Keri Hogue/Gary Grinvalds

This was an amazing year for the Elmwood-Murdock drama program. We prepared and performed the musical, "Godspell" by Stephen Schwartz and John-Michael Telebak. We had 35 students involved in many different capacities with a variety of talents which made our team a true community. This year, we had Mr. Gary Grinvalds join as Assistant Director which helped us with the music and overall quality of our performance.

There were a variety of highlights to our season. One highlight was bringing home the ECNC Runner-Up plaque for our conference. We hosted the event as an entire team and competed with nine other schools in our conference. All 35 students demonstrated leadership and integrity on and off the stage. We also were so fortunate to have the E-M Booster club invest in a lighting system for the program that allowed us to add some neat technical and wireless components to the show including colored lights and a fog machine. Another exciting adventure was having our first "Dinner and Dress Rehearsal" as a fundraiser for our program catered

by Round the Bend Steakhouse. Kim Arent and Michelle Meyer took the leadership on this event and it had an overwhelming response! Despite the wintery conditions, we had over 230 people in attendance, and were able to raise enough money to have a good foundation for future expenditures to build our program. The primary use of funding for next year will most likely be costume rentals. The rest of the money will be kept in savings as we navigate and find the next component that will help the students to grow as performers and leaders. We are hoping to make the "Dinner and Dress Rehearsal" an annual event.

With all of our competitions, we received eight superior scores, one excellent score, and recognition of specific students in the area of outstanding actor/actress. Students who received special recognition were: Cody Bornemeier, Andy Meyer, Valerie Miller, Hannah Mather, Molly Feile, Ham Vidaurre, Alyssa Closner, Constance Baker, Azael Mbantayne, Rylee Hogue, Noah Arent, Gus Pope, Bre Romero, and Riley Rose. Hayden Ernst and Rylee Hogue also received NSAA Academic All-State Honors for Play Production. We ended our season with 3rd place in a competitive and talented C2 District. We have put the set, costumes, and equipment away, but we will always keep the memories made with "Godspell" close to us with this group of individuals.

Our sincerest thanks goes to the school board, administration, staff, parents, community, and the dedicated students. For now, the "show must go on" to next year in preparations for the 2019 season!

ELEMENTARY STUDENT COUNCIL JoDee Paulsen

Our Elementary Student Council has had a very productive start to

the school year. In August, we had our elections and elected 18 students to be representatives for our fourth, fifth and sixth grade classes. In order to run for Student Council, each child needed to fill out an application and give a speech in front of their entire grade level. Once this is done, the classes voted for three representatives, and then the staff voted for two. Due to a tie, we ended up with a few extra this year. Our fourth-grade representatives are: Mya Kavan, Ryerson Kastens, Dylan Bornemeier, Ellie Meyer, Carson Towle and Luke Dougherty. The fifth grade representatives are: Annie Backemeyer, Delaney Shield, Hannah Petersen, Leo Rikli, Dashiell Coleman and Lane Mills. The sixth grade representatives are: Madison Ashlock, Averi Hogue, Kayden Bacon, Drake Clements, Rowan Kastens and Harrison Koehn.

Be Your Best Week: In November, we brought back Be Your Best Week. This is a week designed to teach students about various ways they can practice following our school motto of Be Your Best. The Student Council members broke into groups and prepared lessons for the elementary students. Each book incorporated a picture book they could use as part of their lessons. The lessons were about being a positive member of the community, making wise choices, being proud of who you are, trying new things and including others. It was a very positive experience for all.

Fundraising: All of our events and activities are funded by our own organization and we also help to support other programs and activities throughout our building. In order to raise funds for this, we work concessions during Junior High ball games and run a school store. Our school store takes place once a month. We sell school supplies like pencils, pens, markers and other school necessities and a very low cost.

Food Drive: Once again, we teamed up with the Jr. High and High School student councils to kick off our annual food drive. In order to do this, we went house to house around Murdock and Elmwood asking for donations. It was a chilly morning, but we managed to collect over 500 donations in food and cash. Definitely a great start to our drive!

Our goals for the remainder of the year will be a fundraiser for an organization outside of our school. We will determine the project in February with a completion goal around March. We also plan Dr. Seuss Week (Read Across America) with some reading incentives and goals. If possible, we would also like to plan a project that centers around Earth Day and Recycling in April.

JUNIOR HIGH STUDENT COUNCIL Peggy Guenther

The student council is chosen to organize events and activities, address issues of concern, and be a positive role model at all times. The students oversee the paper recycling, assist with the annual food drive, and plan the annual junior high field trip. The 2018-2019 student council consist of Ella Zierott, Karly Anderson, Henry Coleman, Jordan Vogler, Tatum Backemeyer, and Kearah Perreault.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT COUNCIL Nichole Justesen

It has been a busy year for the student council thus far! Student Council made a few changes for the 2018 school year. The first goal was to increase the number of student council members in order to build more leaders in our school and community. The student council is also made up of an advisory board that meets to brainstorm on

ideas before presenting them to the student council and student body.

Homecoming Activities

In October, we organized Spirit Week and Homecoming with the EM Cheerleaders. Homecoming was a huge success! The high school had its first ever school wide pep rally. The high school and junior high were bused to the elementary where all students were included in the homecoming festivities. The Student Council and the Cheerleaders organized and led the following games throughout Homecoming week to get students involved in spirit week and to raise money for a good cause. All proceeds were donated to the hurricane relief fund. We raised over \$264.00 for the hurricane relief effort! Below is a list of activities that were planned by Student Council:

Monday - First Period – Mega Ring Toss
Tuesday – Knock out
(winning class play teachers)
Wednesday – Blind Volleyball
(winning class play teachers)
Thursday – Balloon Pop Relay
(winning class play teachers)
Friday – School wide pep rally in Elmwood

Homecoming Court 2018:

Nick Langfeldt / Sydney Kunz
Carter Bornemeier / Elyse Drake
Andy Meyer/Faith Offner

Crown Bearers –
Bray Burrows – Son of B.J. and Kristi Burrows
Elsie Schweitzer – Daughter of Meaghan and Josh Schweitzer

King – Andy Meyer
Queen – Sydney Kunz

Veterans Day-In November, the student council honored Veterans at both Elmwood-Murdock School sites at the annual, “Veterans Day” programs on Monday, November 12, 2018.

Local veterans, their spouses, and the public were invited to attend either one or both programs. The guest speaker was Don Klaumann and the Gretna Freedom Riders. The concert band and choir lead by

Mr. Hanson and Mr. Grinvald, also performed several songs during the presentation. Oxbow Quilters, a local quilt group, also made a special presentation and awarded Quilts of Valor to local veterans touched by war. Lunch was served afterwards for all Veterans and their families.

Food Drive-The Student Council decided to ramp up our food drive efforts this year by having kick-off day in Elmwood and Murdock communities. The Student Council walked around the Murdock and Elmwood communities collecting canned goods for "Drive Out Hunger" on November 19th. This was a combined effort with the Elementary, Jr. High, and High School Student Council and the patrons of Elmwood and Murdock. Despite the cold temperatures, the drive was a huge success! We collected over 535 cans of food for our communities' local food bank. The student council is making the kick-off an annual event!

The Canned Food Drive launches this week at both schools and ends on Dec 20th. Our goal is to collect 3000 cans for each building. The winner of this year's food drive will get an ice cream party on the last day of first semester and first in line for lunch for semester 2. We will have one winner in first lunch and one winner in 2nd lunch!

SCIENCE CLUB **Laura Stock**

Science Club is off to a great start this year. We have thirty excited and engaged members this year. We kicked off the year with our annual make your own ice cream social. In September, we modified and launched rocket copters. We held a science themed jack o' lantern carving contest in October for Halloween. We dissected dogfish sharks at our December meeting. A highlight of the first semester by holding our annual 'Hour of Code'

event at the elementary school to celebrate National Computer Science Education week. Eighty-six elementary students in grades K-6 attended the event! Next semester we will begin preparing for the annual Science Bowl in Wayne, NE and the annual Science Olympiad competition that will be held in April at UNL's East Campus. We will also partner with the Lower Platte NRD to host a "Test your Well Water Night" at the Murdock building on February 26th. More details will follow on this event in the next few weeks.

ART CLUB **Rebecca Campbell**

Art Club meets approximately once a month here at the high school. We have students from 7th through 12th grade and approximately 16 members this year. The Art Club provides an opportunity for any student who is seeking a creative outlet in addition to their academic schedule as well as visual art students who enjoy the added creative time. The various activities like our recent "Friendsgiving" allow our members time for fun and good fellowship in addition to creating something they don't normally get to do in a structured class. We also have plans with the Spanish club for a future field trip to the Museo de Latino in Omaha.

QUIZ BOWL **Lisa Schmidt**

Middle School Quiz Bowl has participated in several meets this year. Members have competed in two of the four Cass County Quad Quiz Bowl meets. The 8th grade team won the October 1st Cass County Quad meet, beating Weeping Water, Louisville and Conestoga for the title. The 7th grade team won both the October 1st and October 29th meets and looks to improve their record in February and March. We are continuously improving on our teamwork and understanding of

the Quiz Bowl process. We will compete in the remaining two Cass County Quad meets and ECNC during 2nd semester. Team members include:

8th Grade: Cole Bornemeier, Henry Coleman, Samuel Cox, Reid Fletcher, Cade Hosier, Haylee Josoff, Angelo Leone, and Ella Zierott

7th Grade: Tyson Mans, Nathan Miller, Kearah Perrault, Garrett Pleiss and Riley Wilson.

High School Quiz Bowl has been practicing throughout the fall semester. We have competed at Wesleyan University and have helped host the Cass County Quad for the Junior High Quiz Bowl Team. We look forward to competing at ESU #3 and ECNC competitions in the Winter and Spring. Members include:

9th Grade: Sela Rikli

10th Grade: Noah Arent, Rylee Hogue, Gus Pope, Maggie Richter and Justin Wolph

11th Grade: Molly Feile, Abraham Viduarre

TEAMMATES **JoDee Paulsen**

Our Elmwood-Murdock TeamMates chapter is still growing with the hopes of getting even bigger. TeamMates is a school-based, one-to-one mentoring program co-founded by Dr. Tom Osborne and Nancy Osborne. The focus of the mentoring relationship is for an adult volunteer to help build a positive relationship with a student so as to help them reach their full potential.

Our matches spend their time building relationships by playing games, doing crafts or simply just hanging out together. All meetings are held at the school during the school day.

We are currently at 22 matches, but have a goal of 25 by the end of the school year. We would love to have all students be a part of this great organization.

If you or someone you know would be interested in becoming a mentor or a mentee, please contact JoDee Paulsen for more information.

FOOTBALL

Lance Steffen

The 2018 season was a new and exciting experience for the players and myself. This was our first season as a consolidated district playing 8 man football. It was also the first season for me returning to my alma mater as the head coach of the Knights. While we didn't achieve at the level we had hoped for, the team gained valuable life experiences that will only benefit them later in life.

Season recap-

The 2018 Football team had 18 players. We truly begin our season in May with our Knight Power strength and conditioning program. We ask a lot of our male athletes – 40 days – and we had 13 football players reach that goal. The purpose of Knight Power is to build our bodies for success on the field of competition as well as to build positive work ethic habits and a commitment to the team when many of their peers are enjoying time off from school-related responsibilities. It is our philosophy that the workout only works, if you work. This belief was quantified with an average of 20.8 lbs. of improvement across 3 lifts, while those that didn't make 40 days in the weight room averaged 0.6 lbs. of improvement across the same three lifts.

Our goals for 2018 were focused on building a culture that was more team-oriented and dedicated to the idea of steady improvement. We were incredibly young this season

with several players in starting roles who had little or no varsity experience. Due in large part to this youth, we struggled early in the season, but a credit to this team is how we competed down the stretch and improved week to week, finishing second in our district and qualifying for the Class D-1 Playoffs. Though we did not win the district, we competed at a very high level against the district champion Lourdes Central Catholic before losing in the final seconds. We responded well to this loss and by the end of the season we were able to play in a similar game against a very talented Palmyra team and the tables turned with our victory in the fourth quarter after trailing the game up to that point.

Everyone contributed to our success and improvement throughout the season both at the varsity and the junior varsity level. Due to our low numbers, we relied heavily on everyone being at practice. I was very proud of the very few absences we had from school and practice which allowed us to excel in the classroom as well as on the field. I am especially thankful for our lone senior, Andy. It is a difficult prospect being a senior on any team, let alone shouldering the leadership load alone like he did. We will miss him and his leadership as we head into next season.

For those players that are returning next year and any who are considering going out that didn't play last year, we are building something special and I encourage your participation. I am very excited for next season and can't wait to start!

JUNIOR HIGH FOOTBALL

Don Brothers

The junior high football team had a very successful season this year. With the change to 8-man being a pretty smooth transition. Our team finished the season with a record of 4-1.

The players only loss was a 6 point loss to Mead. The team made great strides on both offense and defense. All 14 players played very well and practiced hard every day. This was my first year coaching junior high football and I would like to give a big shout out to Coach Dwyer for all his help, and call a great defensive game. We would also like to thank the parents for bringing food and drinks to the players and coaches after games. It was greatly appreciated and enjoyed by all.

VOLLEYBALL

Nichole Justesen

Season recap –

The 2018 Elmwood-Murdock volleyball team has 28 girls out for volleyball. The girls worked hard over the summer. The girls started lifting at the end of May and continued through August. We averaged 9 girls Monday - Thursday at 5:30 a.m. over the course of the summer. The main focus was increased strengths and quickness. My assist coaches were Jenny Schroll, Lisa Schmidt, and Kelli Florell.

Our team goals for 2018 focused on high efficiency of passing and serving, as well as, creating a positive team-oriented court. We worked toward achieving our goal during the off-season by bringing in Gwen Egbert, Head Doane University Coach, to develop our passing/serving skills. We also attend two team camps in July at Creighton and Iowa State University.

Everyone on the team impacted our success at both the Junior Varsity and Varsity level. Our team goals include 90% serving and 80% - 85% passing accuracy and team unity. We finished the 2018 year with 16 – 16 record. We ended the year at 87.2% serving and 81% serve receive efficiency. Despite not winning our sub-district game against Nebraska City Lourdes, I

was very proud of all of the girls' effort and commitment during the season. Our last two games showed how much the girls loved the game of volleyball. The seniors were instrumental in our successful year. They provided positive team bonding and motivation on and off the court.

This year our community outreach development focused on cancer awareness and how it impacts our volleyball and school communities. Our team decided to support two families within our school family that have been directly impacted by cancer. Coach Kimbrook Tennal (Coach 10L), our junior high/senior high math teacher, Kim Tennal's, husband, has stage 3-colon cancer that has spread throughout his body. Coach 10L is a Physical Education teacher and head volleyball coach for Centralia High School, in Kansas.

Our second family was, Bob Talbitzer, Coach Schmidt's brother. Bob is a teacher in Kearney, who has Grade 5 glioblastoma femoris brain cancer. Bob Talbitzer also shared his journey of faith and love with the communities of Elmwood-Murdock in a short talk in between matches.

Both Bob and Kim are cancer superheroes to the Elmwood-Murdock volleyball team because of the impact they have on the lives around them. Bob is fighting cancer for his family and loved ones, and Mrs. Tennal is superwoman to her strong husband. This year we raised a total of \$821.96 for our cancer drive! A special thank you to Jolean Piitz and Kristy Burrows for donating their labor on our cancer drive shirts.

For those girls who will be returning next year, I look forward to another exciting year. We will also be attending a team camp July 26-July 31

st in Fort Collins, Colorado.

JUNIOR HIGH VOLLEYBALL

Morgan Manley

This year was the first year for me to be the Junior High Volleyball head coach. My assistant this year was Kim Rust, and we couldn't be more proud of the girls. They worked hard all season and always played their best in games. We played several difficult teams this year, but we had a very young team as well. Our B team won the Championship the Louisville Tournament, B Division. Our B team didn't lose a single set the entire year.

Our 7th graders included: Tatum Backemeyer, Madison Lambert, Lexi Bornemeier, Madie Justesen, Hannah Josoff, Jordan Vogler, Jacie Fleischman, Delaney Frahm, and Cassidy Callaway

Our 8th graders included: Ella Zierott, Karly Anderson, and Haylee Josoff

Again, we are very proud of our girls and their dedication all season. We are looking forward to next year for another great season.

HS/JH CROSS COUNTRY

Peggy Guenther

The 2018 Cross Country Team participated in 7 meets. The high school course is a 5K run and the junior high varies between 1.2 and 2 miles. Cross Country is run on a variety of surfaces and the athletes enjoyed the opportunity to practice in Murdock, in Elmwood and at our state parks. Every athlete improved in speed and endurance throughout the season. Sara Kicak earned medals in 3 races. The high school team consisted of; Austin Hawks, Chaz Mellen, Constence Baker, and Tucker Oehlerking. The junior team was; Sara Kicak, Angelo Leone, Riley Wilson, Brianna Ross, Lily Pope. Go Knights!

UNIFIED BOWLING

April Bacon

This is our district's second year participating in unified bowling. The purpose of unified bowling is to promote social inclusion through a shared sport. Unified bowling joins people with and without intellectual disabilities on the same team. It was inspired by a simple principle: training together and playing together is a quick path to friendship and understanding. Having a sport in common is just one more way that preconceptions and false ideas are swept away.

The district had two teams composed of seven students this year for bowling. The season is packed into the month of November. The bowling team practiced once a week after school at Parkway Lanes in Lincoln, Nebraska. The season consisted of five regular season matches and then districts. The team bowled six games each match using a bakers format. The team traveled to Lincoln, Omaha, Tecumseh and Fremont for the matches. Post season play consisted of a district match in Lincoln. The team received first place in two different tournaments this year. The athletes and partners both improved their skills during the season but more importantly had fun doing a sport that was new to everyone. Our goal for next year is to continue to increase the number of athletes and partners participating in the sport.

GOLF

Curt Backemeyer

The boys' golf season concluded last May with team highlights including 1st place finishes at the ECNC Conference Meet, the Friend Invitational, and the Southern Invitational. The team also finished in 2nd place at the Syracuse, Milford, Elmwood-Murdock, and Lincoln Christian Invitationals.

The team of Zach Rust, Wes Dreamer, Nick Langfeldt, Nolan Langfeldt, and Riley Backemeyer qualified for the State meet at the Kearney Country Club with a runner-up finish at the District meet at Woodland Hills, Eagle. Riley Backemeyer and Nick Langfeldt qualified individually for State as well by finishing 4th and 5th respectively. The team was able to play its best of the season at State finishing as Runner-up to Grand Island Central Catholic. Team members also broke 20-year old State meet school records for both 18-holes (318) and 36-holes (647). The State Runner-up finish also equaled E-M's best team finish from 1995. Nick and Nolan Langfeldt earned 9th place and 15th place Individual State medals respectively, as well. NSAA Academic All-State selections were Payton Frahm and Riley Backemeyer.

Team members were:

Seniors – Riley Backemeyer, Zach Callaway, Payton Frahm, Zach Rust

Juniors – Wes Dreamer, Nick Langfeldt, Nolan Langfeldt

Freshmen – Devin Mather, Gus Pope

GIRLS GOLF

The fall of 2018 marked the ninth girls' golf season for Elmwood-Murdock. The Knights had two team members: Morgan Mills (senior) and Rylee Hogue (sophomore). Although there were not enough girls for a team score, the girls once again did an excellent job of demonstrating character and persistence to represent the school well while developing skills in this lifetime sport.

HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL Aaron Pryor

The 2018-19 Season is off and running with games at the Varsity, Junior Varsity, and C Team Level. We currently have about 26 students in the program Grades 9-12. Players put in a lot of time this off season in preparation for the season. Now about a month in, we are seeing progress from players at all levels of the program, both in practice and in games.

We are relying on our 8 seniors for leadership both on and off of the court. Seniors include: Nolan Langfeldt, Nick Langfeldt, Carter Bornemeier, Andy Meyer, Caleb Jones, Tommy Eggert, Cody Bornemeier and Cole Cooper.

We appreciate your support as we navigate both a difficult non-conference and conference schedule in preparation of District play come February. Go Knights!

JUNIOR HIGH BOYS BASKETBALL Monte Frerichs

This season there were 23 boys on the team. Against most opponents we were able to split into 3 teams. In the early season tournament the A team was tournament champions in the A division and the B team was tournament runner-up in the B division. It was great to see the growth of the teams as we moved from November into December. The overall goal is to develop the players and practice skills that will carry them into high school. I think teamwork is one of the most important attributes of any program and throughout the season this became a main focus. The A team finished 8-4. The B team finished 6-6. The C team finished 3-2. At the end of the year tournament the A team was tournament champions in their division and the B team was runner-up in their division. The boys really ended the year strong and got better each week.



ELMWOOD-MURDOCK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PK-12 Enrollment for 2017-18

Preschool	53
Kindergarten	47
1 st Grade	33
2 nd Grade	35
3 rd Grade	29
4 th Grade	29
5 th Grade	28
6 th Grade	32
7 th Grade	24
8 th Grade	28
9 th Grade	22
10 th Grade	32
11 th Grade	33
12 th Grade	36
Total PK-12	461

PK-12 Enrollment Totals

2017-18	461
2016-17	442
2015-16	442

PK-12 Daily Attendance

	<u>E-M</u>
2017-18	95.14%
2016-17	95.09%
2017-18	95.24%

2018 ACT (11th Grade)

(% Meeting/Exceeding Proficiency)

	<u>E-M</u>	<u>State</u>
Lang. Arts	77	50
Math	77	50
Science	81	54

Elmwood-Murdock 2017-18 AQuESTT Ranking Summary

District	Excellent (4)
High School	Great (3)
Junior High	Excellent (4)
Elementary	Great (3)

Option Enrollment Students

	<u>Opt In</u>	<u>Opt Out</u>
2017-18	69	27
2016-17	63	20
2015-16	77	19

State of the Schools Annual Report January 2019

Board of Education

Jeff Backemeyer	Kathy Frahm
Mark Luetchens	Mark Meyer
Dave Oehlerking	Jesse Rust

Mill Levy and Valuation Data

	<u>Gen. Fund Tax Levy</u>	<u>District Valuation</u>
2017-18	.9203	\$459,866,668
2016-17	.8804	\$470,270,721
2015-16	.8787	\$455,942,350

State Aid and Gen. Fund Tax Request Data

	<u>State Aid</u>	<u>Property Tax Request</u>
2017-18	\$438,332	\$4,313,698
2016-17	\$438,882	\$4,232,324
2015-16	\$612,098	\$4,140,600

Total General Fund Disbursements

2017-18	\$5,314,737
2016-17	\$5,159,178
2015-16	\$5,016,745

NSCSAS Math Spring 2018 Results

(% Meeting/Exceeding Proficiency)

	<u>E-M</u>	<u>State</u>
3 rd Grade	73	50
4 th Grade	66	50
5 th Grade	79	50
6 th Grade	91	55
7 th Grade	58	49
8 th Grade	86	50
Overall	76	51

Transportation Facts and Figures

Total Transportation Costs for 2017-18: \$243,592

Vehicles in Fleet: 2006 Bus (2), 2008 Bus, 2010 Bus, 2013 Bus, 2018 Bus, 2006 Mini Van, 2010 Mini Van (Lunch), 2004 Mini Van (Sped), 2013 Car, 2001 Van (Maintenance), 2009 Full Size Van (2)

Class of 2018 Data

Total Number of 2018 Elmwood-Murdock Graduates	36
Number of Graduates that received at least one scholarship	25
Number of Graduates attending a 4-year college	20
Number of Graduates attending a 2-year college	11
Number of Graduates in the military	1
Number of Graduates entering the workforce	4

Elmwood-Murdock Mission Statement

**Empowering ALL Students
To Achieve Success!**

Average Teacher Salary Data

	<u>E-M</u>	<u>State</u>
2017-18	\$51,810	\$54,422
2016-17	\$50,458	\$52,534

Teachers with Master's Degree/Higher

	<u>E-M</u>	<u>State</u>
2017-18	59%	55%
2016-17	53%	54%

NSCAS Reading Spring 2018 Results

(% Meeting/Exceeding Proficiency)

	<u>E-M</u>	<u>State</u>
3 rd Grade	80	53
4 th Grade	72	56
5 th Grade	68	51
6 th Grade	69	47
7 th Grade	46	47
8 th Grade	64	51
Overall	67	51

NSCAS Science Spring 2018 Results

(% Meeting/Exceeding Proficiency)

	<u>E-M</u>	<u>State</u>
5 th Grade	93	69
8 th Grade	89	66
Overall	91	68

Spring 2018 (NWEA) MAPS Standardized Test Scores % of students above 50th percentile

	<u>E-M</u>	
	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Math</u>
Kindergarten	98%	98%
1 st Grade	85%	91%
2 nd Grade	92%	92%
3 rd Grade	90%	83%
4 th Grade	79%	83%
5 th Grade	82%	79%
6 th Grade	88%	81%
7 th Grade	58%	54%
8 th Grade	86%	89%

Student Population Characteristics

2017-18

	<u>E-M</u>
Enrolled in Special Education	13%
Mobility	6.4%
Eligible for Free/Reduced meals	16%
High Ability (HAL)	18%

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

SAVE THE DATE: FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 2019

If your son/daughter turns 5 on or before July 31, 2019, they are eligible to begin Kindergarten in August 2019. Please contact the Elementary office at 402-994-2125 to make sure you are on our list for the 2019-2020 school year. More information will be made available at a later date in regard to Kindergarten Registration. If you know of any families that are new to the Elmwood-Murdock community, please share this information with them. Thank you!



Pre-Kindergarten Program 2019-2020

If your son/daughter turns 3 or 4 on or before July 31, 2019, they are eligible to be a part of our pre-kindergarten program during the 2019-2020 school year. Pre-kindergarten registration will take place in the spring, but please contact the Elementary office at 402-994-2125 for more information or to confirm your interest for the next school year.

February 2019

Elmwood Murdock Public Schools

LUNCH



School Information: No school 8th - 11th - and 28th



Nutrition Tip: Practice stealth health - sneak veggies into favorite foods. Go light on the meat and top your pizza with vegetables like tomatoes, onions, bell peppers, mushrooms, zucchini, and artichoke hearts.



Monday



4
Chicken Nuggets
Carrots
Fruit
Biscuit / Honey
Milk

No School

11

Hamburger
WG Bun
Baked Beans
Fruit
Milk

12

18
Ham Patty
WG Bun
Au gratin Potatoes
Fruit
Milk

19
Taco
Toppings
Refried Beans
Churro
Fruit
Milk

25
Crispito
Cheese sauce
Broccoli
Fruit
Milk

26
Pork Rib - E
BBQ Pork - M
WG Bun
Baked beans
Fruit
Milk

27
Teriyaki Chicken
Asian Rice
Prince William vegetables
Fruit
Muffin
Milk

28



Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

1
Popcorn chicken
Carrots
Fruit
Snack cracker
Milk

8

No School

7

Grilled chicken
WG Bun
Carrots
Fruit
Rice Krispie Bar

6

Sloppy Joe - E
French Dip - M
WG Bun
Peas
Chips
Fruit / Milk

5

Mini Corn Dog
Carrots
Fruit
Snack cracker
Milk

4

15

Quesadilla
Tossed Salad
Fruit
Milk

14

Creamed Turkey
Over biscuit
Mixed Vegetables
Fruit
Milk

13

Chicken Filet
Mashed potato / gravy
Broccoli
WG dinner roll
Fruit
Milk

12

22

Pizza
Tossed salad
Fruit
Ice cream
Milk

21

Chicken noodle or
Tomato Soup
WG Grilled Cheese
Fruit
Milk

20

Chicken Strips
Broccoli
Fruit
Snack cracker
Milk

19

February 2019

Elmwood Murdock Public Schools

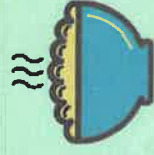
BREAKFAST



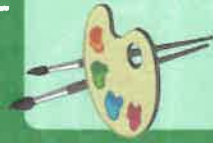
School Information: No school 8th, 11th, and 28th



Nutrition Tip: Practice stealth health - sneak veggies into favorite foods. Go light on the meat and top your pizza with vegetables like tomatoes, onions, bell peppers, mushrooms, zucchini, and artichoke hearts.



Monday



4

Bagels /cream cheese –
Breakfast Pizza – M
Fruit
Juice
Milk

11

No School

18

Bagels /cream cheese –
Breakfast Pizza – M
Fruit
Juice
Milk

25

Breakfast Pizza
Fruit
Juice
Milk

Tuesday

5

Mini French toast – E
Breakfast Sandwich - M
Fruit
Juice
Milk

12

Ham combo & Mini
Loaves – E
Breakfast sandwich – M
Fruit
Juice

19

Mini French toast – E
Breakfast Sandwich - M
Fruit
Juice
Milk

26

Ham combo & Mini
Loaves – E
Breakfast sandwich – M
Fruit
Juice

Wednesday

6

Cereal bar & Yogurt –E
French toast sticks –M
Fruit
Juice
Milk

13

Breakfast sliders – E
French toast Sticks – M
Fruit
Juice
Milk

20

Cereal bar & Yogurt –E
French toast sticks –M
Fruit
Juice
Milk

27

Breakfast sliders – E
French toast Sticks – M
Fruit
Juice
Milk

Thursday

7

Pancake stick –E
Breakfast Burrito - M
Fruit
Juice
Milk

14

Mini Cinnis – E
Breakfast Burrito – M
Fruit
Juice
Milk

21

Pancake stick –E
Breakfast Burrito - M
Fruit
Juice
Milk

28

No School

Friday

1

Frudel – E
Omelet & WG toast – M
Fruit
Juice
Milk

8

No School

15

Frudel – E
Omelet & WG toast – M
Fruit
Juice
Milk

22

Cereal & Go Gurt – E
Omelet & WG Toast – M
Fruit
Juice
Milk

