

February 2019

**Superintendent's Corner**  
**Mike Mathes**

### **The Importance of Having a Good School Infrastructure**

For those who love to read and study, any place can be good to read and learn. They might argue that the space you are in does not matter, that knowledge is immaterial, that the physical context is secondary, and that what is important is to concentrate in what you are reading.

But if we transfer this reasoning to the reality of educational systems, the empiric evidence is flagrant: having renewed rooms and learning spaces in good condition is decisive for students to achieve the expected academic results. In other words, the conditions of the schools directly impacts the performance of the students.

The fact is that a good school infrastructure, with renewed spaces, tends to improve the attendance and interest of students and teachers in learning. For this same reason, investments in school infrastructure have an essential role in solving access problems of students to the school system and to improve their performance.

According to the experts, schools must at least comply with the following parameters:

- Comfort for students, teachers, and administrators: spaces for teachers and students, with an adequate temperature, ventilation, and lighting, with water, electricity, and Internet services, as well as sanitary services and the respective drainage of sewage waters.
- Spaces for the development of rehearsals and practices such as libraries, and natural sciences, information technology, physics and chemistry labs.
- Spaces for the development of talents and entertainment, sports, and culture.

Daniel Rivera, Social Development Project Director at CAF, states, "The improvement of the physical conditions of schools is as closely related to learning as other educational inputs including home environment, motivation, good teachers, libraries, technologies, or student services".

### **The Impact of Infrastructure on Educational Quality**

A review of the most recent literature indicates that investments to improve school infrastructure has effects on the educational quality at least in the following three dimensions:

1. Attendance and completion of academic cycles. Several studies have found that the physical conditions of school buildings positively affects school completion and attendance rates.
2. Teacher motivation. Evidence indicates that teachers in schools with good infrastructure have, on average, 10 percent less absenteeism than teachers in schools with deficient infrastructure. In fact, the study found that infrastructure had a greater effect reducing absenteeism than teacher salaries or the effect of the administrative tolerance for absences.
3. Learning results. Studies carried out in the United States, such as the one conducted by [21st Century School Fund in 2010](#), found positive results which are statistically significant between school infrastructure and standardized tests to measure learning processes in many parts of the country. With lower student socio-economic levels, the results were higher.

Hanushek (1995) found that the results of 34 studies with production functions in developing countries that analyzed the relationship between school facilities and learning mostly found a positive effect. Vélez, Schiefelbein, and Valenzuela (1993) also indicate positive results between infrastructure quality and learning.

Empiric evidence indicates that there is a direct relationship between school infrastructure and educational performance, and that investments in educational infrastructure contribute to improve the quality of education and the economic performance of countries.

Rivera explains "To optimize investments in education it is essential for authorities to observe the significant role of infrastructure interacting with other essential educational inputs to be able to undertake comprehensive proposals that together, improve the quality of education, thus promoting greater equality of opportunities and contribute to reduce inequalities and advance toward a real productive transformation in the region".

Article reprinted from CAF.com CAF Development Bank October 2016



Have you heard the buzz about  
**School Redesign?**

Come to FAST Night  
(Families and Schools Together)  
on March 5, 2019 to learn what  
School Redesign  
is all about!

There will be more information in  
the coming weeks about FAST  
Night – save the date and plan to  
attend!

**FAST NIGHT**

**March 5, 2019**

**6:00-7:30**

**Northern Heights High School!**



## Principal's Perspective

Semester 2 is off and rolling at NLC! This is an interesting time of year administratively as next school years' plans for staffing and the building happen now while still having 4 months left of next year. By the time you will have read this, I will have already met with HTK, our school board's hired architect, to begin designs on some internal changes to our NLC Elementary building. Security will be the highest priority along with updates to our bathrooms. We recently installed new hardware on our K-5 classroom doors to allow them to be locked easily from the inside, no longer requiring staff to take their keys and lock the door from the outside - placing them and students in danger even longer if an emergency requires a full lockdown. HTK will help us design and construct a secure front entrance. Moving the office to the front of our building will force all visitors to enter through the office. Only after they sign in and are identified would they be buzzed into the building. Jr High doors, still original to the building, will be replaced to current code and be given the same "lockable from the inside" ability as the current K-5 doors. Updating our bathrooms will also be on the list to take care of this summer. While these changes will not give us additional space we need to properly accommodate 240 students, it will help greatly with security given currently our office is in the center of the building and is difficult to locate.

Basketball season for us has now passed and Quiz Bowl is underway. Mrs. Robinson, our quiz bowl coach, has 15- 7th graders and 14- 8th graders that will rotate and compete in our various quiz bowl league meets. NLC will host the league quiz bowl meet this year on March 4th. Please contact the school if you would be interested in helping. Our number, which is new, is 620-481-2086.

Lastly, I hope that you consider joining us for our upcoming FAST night on March 5th at NHHS at 6pm. I have been talking to you a lot about our school redesign and this night, along with some free food, will be focused on the details of what KSDE school redesign is and what it will look like at NLC Elementary and NHHS. Hope you will join us!

***Corey Wiltz***

NLC Elementary Principal

## **Counselor Comments**

We are continuing the Second Step Curriculum in grades K-8.

This month, the K-5 students are discussing the topic of Empathy and how feelings affect their decisions. Once we finish these discussions and activities, the students will be doing some career exploration during their guidance lessons.

As a part of their Second Step lessons, the junior high students have been participating in activities dealing with values and friendships. These lessons will be completed by the end of February. The junior high students will also continue their career exploration with career cruising. Discussion about the IPS (Individual Plans of Study) will begin in February to prepare for parent/teacher conferences in March.

On February 13th, the 8th graders will travel to NHHS to participate in Reality U. This interactive activity provides them with a glimpse of real life with budgets, laws, and family discussions taking place.

We are also continuing our Student Improvement Meetings (SIT), so if you would like to schedule a meeting to discuss academic or behavior concerns, please call me at 620-481-2086.

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*Mrs. Aimee Landgren; Americus/NLC School Counselor*

## NLC Elementary Music



My name is Alicia Schoenberger and I am the new K-5 music and 5th grade band teacher at NLC Elementary! I am a recent graduate of Washburn University where I received my undergraduate degree in music education. My primary instrument that I studied is the flute, but I also love to sing. While I student taught in a band setting, I am so excited to give the K-5 students some of their first musical experiences.

I plan on having students at all levels gain understanding of music through song, dance, and hands on learning with instruments. Every Friday students will learn about a different instrument during the “Instrument in the Spotlight” presentation. During these lessons I demonstrate the instrument being discussed, address the history, functionality, and purpose of it, and show different photos and audio/visual clips. The presentations have been a big hit with all of the students so far!

While I still live in Topeka, I am from a small town in eastern Kansas called Paola. Although I have been apart of the NLC team for a short time I feel right at home. The administration, staff, and students have all been exceedingly helpful in my transition to teaching. I really could not imagine starting my teaching career in any other district. I am truly thankful for this opportunity and for everyone’s continued support.

## Greetings from the 6th grade Language Arts Classroom

Did you ever have to diagram a sentence? If yes, do you remember how? If you have never diagrammed a sentence or need a refresher on how to do it, ask a 6th grader. This practice has helped the 6th graders identify subjects, predicates, prepositions, prepositional phrases, objects of the preposition, direct objects, indirect objects, adjectives, adverbs, articles, conjunctions, verbs, and “whew” helping verbs.

This year, being my 3rd year back in education, has forced me to re-familiarize myself with some concepts that I haven’t had to think about in awhile. One of those concepts being the parts of speech and the roles certain words take on in sentence formation.

The 6th grade ELA, English/Language Arts, classroom has been diving into learning the parts of speech that we use on a daily basis and how to use them correctly. I’m encouraging the 6th graders to view writing as they would painting a picture. We first discuss that writing is an art. It’s even in the title of ELA. Having an all blue picture would be pretty boring, so we need to mix in many more colors or in our case, colorful words. We also have discussed the more detail we can add to a picture, the more our audience will appreciate and enjoy it. The 6th graders are showing growth in their writing skills.

We’ve been busily tackling our newscasts. The kids chose their own groups and were responsible to read and find facts in an informational article published in our health magazine, Choices. The kids are almost ready to start filming their newscasts. They will be presenting the facts they identified in their informational text article.

The next step is to edit their newscast videos in an app called iMovie. The 6th graders will import their videos into iMovie, then they can cut out any errors, include background music if they choose, and also create a bloopers segment at the end of their newscast. They sure seem to be having a great time doing this. The kids are fine tuning their public speaking skills, collaboration skills, identifying facts, and making decisions regarding what portions of their text are need to be editing in or out.

Of course we are still brushing up on our grammar and writing skills using the districts new IXL computer program. The kids really enjoy working with this program. Last year, I saw great results on the state testing. Last year’s 6th graders stated that IXL was a big help to them as they completed the state test.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me. Thanks for the privilege of teaching your children.

Mr. Stevenson

**NLC Reading in USD 251**  
**Title I**  
**Jo Dunlap**

Schools that have Title I programs such as we have in our elementary school are required to give notice to parents that they may inquire about the professional qualifications of their students' Title classroom teacher, including the following:

- Whether the teacher has met State qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification of licensing criteria have been waived;
- The baccalaureate degree major and other graduate certification or degree held by the teachers, the field of discipline of the certification or degree, and
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

Parents will be notified if their child is instructed for four consecutive weeks by a teacher that does not meet the definition of "highly qualified."

The Title teacher in North Lyon County has met the qualifications of a Highly Qualified Teacher for the 2018-2019 school year.

### **5th Grade with Mrs. Coble**

Amazingly it is already February! 5th grade has lots of things happening. This is our first year having a partnership with Americus First United Methodist Church. We have helped unload the food pantry truck, written pen pals, and are currently making a quilt with Pastor Sharon for the carnival raffle. Watch for it, I think it is going to turn out awesome. :) Our 3 class representatives are: Kelton Bish, Leo DeDonder, and Briahna Pierce. The candidates gave a speech to the class and were voted into office. So far they are doing a fantastic job. Both of these activities were added this year to provide more civic engagement.

In reading, we are into the book *Number the Stars*, did you know that Denmark saved 98% of their Jews during WWII? Soon the kids will be working on ways they can also make a difference in the school, community, area, nation, or even the world. I am looking forward to see what they come up with.

In math, we are starting fractions but we have a fun little side unit going on as well. I brought in a double hoop basketball game and the kids have been collecting data to find their mean, median, mode, and range averages. They will also find the whole classes average. We will finish this unit with our very own March Madness tournament.

In Science, we are learning about Newton's 3 laws, observed a Newton's cradle, gravity, food webs and chains, interactions between the spheres (they will be constructing some kind of 3D project that shows interaction between at least two of the spheres), and we are hoping to study small organisms soon.

Finally in Social Studies we just finished up our unit about explorers and are now focusing more on just the United States. We have begun studying the colonies and the interactions with the Native Americans. We will be continuing through the Revolutionary War.

This class has come together so well and work so hard I can not believe we are so close to the end of the 3rd nine weeks. Please remind your student to read and take AR tests. The 3rd quarter movie will be here before they know it.





# Northern Heights High School

## Principal's Pen

"If we move forward together, success takes care of itself!"  
Peggy Fort

January has come and gone! As we finish the winter season and move into the spring season, there continues to be many activities for the high school students. I would like to thank all parents for your support of your children!

### 2018 -2019 Kansas State Assessment Overview

Students will be tested in math, reading, science, and social studies this spring. The test window will be open from March 11 - April 26.

The tests will have 2 parts with a suggested 45-60 minute session for each test, but these are estimates and test are untimed. Tests will be multiple choice with technology enhanced items and be machine scored.

Grades Testing are as follows:

- Science (Grades 5,8, 11)
- Reading (Grades 3-8, 10)
- Math (Grades 3-8, 10)

Remember that times are estimates for scheduling purposes. Kansas Assessments are untimed and students will be provided adequate time to finish all test.

## NHHS CALENDAR

February 1	Madison at NHHS basketball - Queen of Courts
February 2	NHHS at Lyndon JV Tournament
February 2	NHHS Winter Ball
February 4	Poultry, Ag management and milk
February 6	FCCLA District Star Event
February 6	DCC
February 9	ACT Test
February 11-15	National FCCLA Week/National FBLA Week
February 12	NHHS basketball home with Olpe
February 13	Reality - U grades 8 -12
February 13	Board of Education Meeting - Americus
February 14	FFA - Meats and Ag Ottawa
February 15	NHHS basketball home Hartford - Senior Recognition
February 18-22	FFA Week
February 18	No School
February 18	President's Day
February 18	Teacher Inservice
February 19	NHHS basketball at West Franklin
February 25	Spring Sports begin
February 25	NHHS basketball substate
February 26	ACT Test NHHS - Juniors at NHHS
February 27	FFA-Ag mechanics, Vet, Agronomy - Louisburg

## Scholars Bowl 2018-2019



The 2018-2019 Scholars Bowl season that started back in October is nearing the end. Coming back after Winter Break we were slated to compete in 5 tournaments in January. One was cancelled due to weather, and we now have 2 remaining. Looking back at the season, there have been many positives for the teams. We often match up with area league schools, but at most of the tournaments we compete in, our opponents represent everything from 1A to 6A schools and include both private as well as public schools. Our 21-36 win/loss record does not show the true progress of the team. We have competed at 7 varsity tournaments so far, matched up against schools in 57 rounds. Of those 57 rounds, the margin of victory was the difference of 1 question in 32% of the rounds. 2 questions marked the difference in winning or not in 58% of the rounds. So we were so very close on many occasions. Not as many schools host tournaments for JV so our JV team only got to compete at 3 tournaments this year. Their 8/15 record included 35% of the rounds where 2 questions or less was the difference between winning and not. But that is often the nature of Scholars Bowl. Only 6 of the 13 members can compete at any one tournament, so we don't always have the same kids competing. We look forward to competing at League and Regionals.

*Above are pictures from several of this years tournaments.*

### News from Mrs. Corpening

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Giving Tree was a success! 35 North Lyon County children were served through this program, which is the record number of students served to date. Mrs. Corpening would like to send out a huge thank you to all of those who sponsored a child or family. It is because of you that programs like this get to happen year after year. Also, thank you to Kelsey Keith for ensuring that each child in the Giving Tree program received a winter coat, hat, and gloves!

Reality U, a financial literacy program serving 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students, is scheduled for February 13<sup>th</sup> from 10am-2pm. Mrs. Corpening is still looking for a few volunteers to help run the booths. Please contact her by email at [corpeningj@usd251.org](mailto:corpeningj@usd251.org) if you would like to volunteer!



### NHHS Counselor Update

The second semester has gotten off to a busy start. I have met with every senior to discuss and help finalize their plans after high school. This has been so rewarding to see how they are progressing and tackling the transition to the next stage. I can't say enough about the support I have had utilizing their Advisory teachers in helping them. I can definitely see the impact the IPS process has had over the last several years as well.

February, and the remainder of the third quarter, will be extremely busy. I plan on meeting with each junior through freshman individually to discuss their course plans for next year. I also enjoy this time visiting with students and hearing what classes they are interested in exploring. Juniors will be taking the ACT on Wednesday, February 20th and the ACT WorkKeys on Thursday, February 21st. If you have a junior, please encourage them to spend as much time as possible studying for these tests. For many students, this is the first time taking them and they should try and get the most from this opportunity.

As always feel free to contact me if you have any questions or if there is anything I can assist you or your student with. Phone: 620-481-2067 Email: [woodrowj@usd251.org](mailto:woodrowj@usd251.org)

Jessica Woodrow

# FLINT HILLS SHOOT OUT 2019

The Flint Hills Shoot Out was held at William Allen White Auditorium on January 14 - 19, 2019. The girls team placed 2nd in the Shoot Out and the boys team placed 5th. The girls team beat Central Heights in the first round of play 64 to 15. They beat Council Grove in the second round 44 to 33. The girls lost a hard fought game against Chase County for first place with a score of 44 to 56. The team received 2nd place medals for the tournament and a plaque for first place in league play.

The boys team placed fifth in the Flint Hills Shoot Out. They lost their first round against Osage City. The boys team then beat Lyndon 45 to 29. They finished the tournament winning their last game against West Franklin 62 to 49. Congratulations to our coaches and team.



## WILDCAT FARMS AT NHHS

The Wildcat Farms at NHHS is so excited to add their steer project. This project has been funded by grants to our school. We would like to thank Frontier Farm Credit for their donation to purchase our steer corral. We recently received four steers from a wonderful anonymous donor. The students at NHHS are so excited for this project. The project is student based. Students are responsible for this project with "total hands on" project.





## Celebrate American Heart Month

### February is American Heart Month

Heart disease is the #1 cause of death in the United States. The objective of this month is to bring awareness about heart-related illness and to decrease the number of people who may have a heart-related illness.

The American Heart Association's goal has remained the same since 1948 – to reduce cardiovascular disease by 25% by the following: decrease the growing obesity trend, reduce untreated high blood pressure, encourage people to start exercising, stop smoking and take the steps necessary to reduce their cholesterol.

Heart disease is the third-leading cause of death for women ages 25 to 44, the second-leading cause of death for women ages 45 to 64, and it is the first leading cause of death for American women greater than 65 years old. Men and women share some common risk factors such as increasing age, heredity, tobacco smoke, high blood cholesterol and blood pressure, physical inactivity obesity and diabetes mellitus. Interestingly, there are some risk factors that play a bigger role in the development of heart disease in women than in men.

### Move of the Month: Walking Towards a Healthier You!

Research has shown that the benefits of walking and moderate physical activity for at least 30 minutes a day can help you:

- Reduce the risk of coronary heart disease
- Improve blood pressure and blood sugar levels
- Lower the risk of obesity and help maintain body weight
- Release endorphins and enhance mental well being
- Reduce your stress level and increase your energy
- Reduce the risk of osteoporosis
- Reduce the risk of breast and colon cancer



### Recipe of the Month: Strawberry Breakfast Sandwich

A strawberry breakfast sandwich sounds strange, but it sure doesn't taste strange! English muffins topped with cheese, honey and strawberries make a delicious start to the day. Pair the sandwich with a green salad and serve with milk for a light lunch or simple supper.

#### Ingredients:

- 8 ounces low-fat cream cheese, softened
- 4 Whole Wheat English muffins, split and toasted
- 1 tablespoon Honey
- 2 cups (about 10 ounces) sliced strawberries
- 1 teaspoon Grated lemon zest

#### Directions:

In food processor, process cheese, honey and zest until well mixed, or mix in bowl with wooden spoon. Spread 1 tablespoon cheese mixture on cut side of 1 muffin half; top with one-quarter cup strawberries. Repeat with remaining ingredients to make 8 open-faced sandwiches.



## Mobilizing Literacy and Kindergarten Readiness

USD 251 offers Preschool Tuition Assistance as part of the Mobilizing Literacy Grant. If your child (age 3-5) is attending, or you would like for your child to attend preschool, please contact the USD 251 school district office at 620-481-2014. We would love to discuss how we can assist you financially with preschool fees.

Each month, a simple, developmentally appropriate activity will be shared to help preschool age children get ready for school. These activities can be used by families at home:

### LANGUAGE SKILLS

#### Discriminates Letters from Pictures

**Activities:**

- When reading to the child, point to the words as they are read. Then ask the child to show you the picture of a word that you read.

*Tip: Label the child's artwork or write dictation and tell the child, "These are the words for what you said."*

#### Tells the Name of Two Printed Letters

**Activities:**

- Create an art wall with each child's name. Point out the letters in the child's name to him or her when displaying the child's artwork.

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