

THE USD 251 COMMUNICATOR

March 2020

Superintendent's Corner

USD 251 North Lyon County Welcomes New Superintendent Mr. Robert Blair!



Mr. Robert W. Blair comes to North Lyon County Schools with 30 years of experience in education. A native of St. Joseph, Missouri, where his father was a school administrator for over 25 years, Blair has served as teacher, coach, principal, and superintendent across Kansas and NW Missouri.

Mr. Blair currently serves as the Superintendent at Riverside USD 114 in Elwood and Wathena, Kansas, a large 2A school with an enrollment of 605 students, for whom Mr. Blair is a steadfast champion. Mr. Blair began his career as a high school Social Studies teacher in Missouri and Kansas for eleven years. Prior to his superintendency, he served as principal at Wathena High School from 2002 until 2011. In 2011, Mr. Blair was hired by the newly consolidated Riverside USD 114 to serve as the high school principal and later assistant superintendent.

This school district is comprised of the former Wathena and Elwood school districts. After serving as principal and assistant superintendent for six years, he was named superintendent in 2017. During his tenure as a high school principal/assistant superintendent, Mr. Blair was known for having a passion for providing all students with access to exemplary learning experiences. He pioneered a Virtual School, Alternative School, 10-block master class schedule with over 20 new course offerings, increased ACT preparation opportunities/ACT scores, started a Speech & Drama program, remodeled a high school theatre, and successfully worked with all stakeholders to pass a school consolidation plan and create a master plan for a newly consolidated high school. As Riverside USD 114 superintendent for the past three years, Mr. Blair successfully planned and passed a Capital Outlay Levy to replace roofs, school buses, vehicles, flooring, HVAC units, and technology. In addition, he completed the construction of new track and football bleachers. Mr. Blair facilitated the writing of a 5-Year Strategic Plan containing the four priorities of improving student achievement, recruiting and retaining quality teachers, engaging the community, and using school district resources responsibly. Other accomplishments have included: writing approximately \$300,000 in grants, increasing district cash balances by 75%, implementing ALICE crisis training, significantly reducing debt, and creating a partnership with a local health clinic to provide counseling services on both campuses. Mr. Blair has just completed a total of 22 years in the Wathena/Riverside school district. He has been very successful in building community support and creating a positive school climate.

Blair holds a Master of Arts in Educational Administration from Kansas State University (1996) and he holds a Kansas District Leadership License after completing coursework at Kansas State (2004). He also has undergraduate degrees in both Political Science and History from Missouri Western State University.

Mr. Blair has been married to his wife Heidi, HS mathematics teacher at Doniphan West High School, Highland, Kansas, for 28 years and they are parents of two daughters and a son: Bailey Blair, Manhattan, Kansas; Caelan Peterson and husband Kendal, Assaria, Kansas; and Brock Blair, a freshman at Kansas State University.

Quote: "I'm very excited to be joining the great educational team at North Lyon County. I have been impressed by the district's student-centered approach, particularly the school-redesign effort. I'm really looking forward to working with the dedicated teachers and staff at North Lyon County to accomplish great outcomes for the students. I am really looking forward to becoming a part of the North Lyon County community and working to increase community engagement in the schools."



Northern Heights High School

PRINCIPAL'S PEN

"If Everyone is Moving Forward Together, then Success Takes Care of Itself"
Peggy Fort

February has come and gone and there have been many activities for the high school students. I would like to thank all parents for your support of your children! February was FBLA, FCCLA, and FFA month. Our FCCLA has qualified many students for State. Our FFA has been working with "Wildcat Farms" and competitions. So far, they have steers, Hydroponics, they built a chicken coop with chickens and created outside garden beds. The scholars bowl team placed third in their regionals and qualified for state. We are so proud of our students and all they are involved in.

FAST Night

Fast Night is scheduled for March 31, at NLC School in Americus, from 5:45pm to 7:45pm. FAST means Families and Schools Together. The evening will begin with a free light supper for all students and parents followed by a night of students performing and staff and students sharing information with families and the district. There will be student displays and learning about our School Redesign progress, clubs and organizations. The night will also include preschool information and an 8th grade parent meeting.

KANSAS ASSESSMENTS

Students will be tested in math, reading and science this spring. The test window will be open from March 16 - April 24. The tests will have 2 parts with a suggested 45-60 minute session for each test, but these are estimates. The tests are untimed and students will be provided adequate time to finish all tests. 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)

Peggy Fort - NHHS Principal

Senior, Khylee Massey harvested the 3rd cutting of aeroponic grown romaine lettuce today for use in the cafeteria. NHHS just received a grant to add a second aeroponic tower to keep the farm to school initiatives moving forward.



District H FCCLA was a huge success for the Northern Heights students!

14 students will participate at the State FCCLA in April! The team ended the day with 4 gold medals and 9 silver medals. Northern Heights has the most State qualifiers in District H! Congratulations Wildcats and Mrs. Dedonder!

NHHS Calendar

2-28	Boys State Wrestling ACT Registration Due for 4/4/2020 Test	3-5	No School Parent Teacher Conference 1:00-8:00pm	3-24	FHL Forensics @ NHHS @ 2:00pm
2-29	Boys State Wrestling		BB - Sub State	3-25	FHL Instrumental/Vocal Music @ Osage City
3-2	NHHS Spring Sports Practice Begins FFA Selection Day and Discussion Meet @ Paola Basketball Sub-State Tournament Begins BB @ NHHS	3-6	No School BB - Sub State	3-27	FFA-FSCC Aggie Day @ Fort Scott
3-3	BB @ NHHS	3-7	BB - Sub State	3-28	Music Regionals - Solos/Small Ensembles
3-4	End of the 3rd Nine Weeks BB - Sub State	3-8	Daylight Savings Time Begins	3-30 & 31	FBLA State Convention @ Topeka
		3-9,10,11,12 & 13	Spring Break Week	3-31	FAST Night at NLC/Americus at 5:45pm
		3-11,12,13 & 14	State Basketball Tournament		
		3-17	St. Patrick's Day		

Judges Needed For Flint Hills League Forensics Tournament at Northern Heights

On Tuesday, March 24, NHHS will host the FHL Forensics Tournament. Students from league schools, including NHHS, will compete in speech and drama events. Forensics is an activity that allows our students to learn and demonstrate important public speaking skills that they will use for the rest of their lives. These tournaments hosted by different schools are the only opportunity for these students to compete, and these tournaments cannot take place without volunteer judges.

There are no requirements needed to be a Forensics judge, just that you listen to students perform either speeches or theatrical pieces, give them some encouragement and advice about their performances, and rank them according to quality on a ballot. A tournament of this size will need approximately 20 judges for the two preliminary rounds, and 30 judges for the final round. You do not need to commit to judging all three rounds, you can judge one or two rounds, or even just finals. We will provide dinner for all judges that night.

Please see the schedule below and let Sarah Malcolm (malcolms@usd251.org or 620-344-0369) know if you would be willing to volunteer your time. She will be glad to answer any questions you may have, and will send further information about the schedule and events to judges prior to March 24.

FLINT HILLS LEAGUE FORENSICS TOURNAMENT-MARCH 24, 2020

2:00-2:30 PM-Teams and Judges Check-In

2:30-4:00 PM-Round 1

4:00-5:30 PM-Round 2

5:30-6:00 PM-Dinner Break

6:00-7:30 PM-Final Round

AWARDS ASAP

NHHS Scholars Bowl

Once again, the Scholars Bowl season has come to a close. We had fewer tournaments this year due to weather. But, overall, our season ended well. The team consisting of Seniors Sophia Arens, Taj Bailey, Michael Marcotte, Myra Phillips, and Sophomores Hank Phillips and Tamara Rued represented Northern Heights at the league tournament on Thursday January 30 at Central Heights High School. The team finished in 3rd place with a record of 5 and 2. They also traveled to Wabaunsee for the Regional tournament. The team qualified for finals, and the finals round concluded with a 5 way tie for first place, with each team having a 3 and 2 record. This was fierce, since the top three teams qualify for the State Championship tournament. Northern Heights finished in 3rd place, which advanced them to the 2A State Tournament at Inman on Saturday February 15. At State, the team finished pool play with a 5 way tie again for first place, with 5 of the 6 teams having a 3 and 2 record. This time, Northern Heights finished in 4th place based on Margin of Victory status, so they did not move on to finals. Such close records say a lot about the strength of the competition our team faced at Regionals and State. It was a great experience for the team. We had a strong group of seniors leading our team and they will be greatly missed. Looking forward to next year, we will have some building to do, and hopefully we have a strong group willing to put in the time to prepare so we can continue our success.

Congratulations to all students who participated in the powerlifting meet at Emporia



POWERLIFTING

Congratulations to all students who participated in the powerlifting meet at Emporia Junior Men's Division:

Jarred Campbell: 2nd in weight class, 2nd in bench, 2nd in squat, 2nd in clean.

Logan Centlivre: 2nd overall, 2nd in bench, 2nd in squat, 3rd in clean.

Men's Division

Cameron Heimen: 1st in weight class, 1st in bench, 1st in squat, 1st in clean.

Tee Preisner: 6th in weight class, 6th in bench, 7th in squat, 3rd in clean.

Women's Division

Aubrey Hinrichs: 5th in weight class, 5th in bench, 5th in squat, 5th in clean.

Makenna French: 3rd in weight class, 3rd in bench, 3rd in squat, 3rd in clean.

7 total medals, 6 new personal best lifts.

Northern Heights High School St Marys powerlifting results:

Aubrey Hinrichs 123lb class: 4th in squats, 5th in clean and bench, 5th overall. 2 new personal best lifts.

Makenna French 148lb class: 1st in clean and squat, 2nd in bench, 1st overall. 2 new personal best lifts.

Tee Preisner heavy weight class: 2nd in clean, 8th in squat, 9th in bench, 8th overall.

Jerrold Campbell 123 class: 3rd in bench and squat, 2nd in clean, 3rd overall. 1 new personal best lift.





Principal's Perspective

Is it Spring yet? All of us here at NLC Elementary are ready for Spring to arrive! Lots of GREAT things are happening at NLC as we await warmer temperatures. We have our quiz bowl teams capturing wins and we have our wrestlers pinning and winning in the first ever NLC Jr High wrestling season! Spring Parent Teacher Conferences will be March 5th with many NLC Elementary teachers conducting student-led conferences. State testing will begin when students return from Spring Break, which is early this year running March 9th-13th.

We need your help!!! It is critical for students to obtain proper sleep and a good breakfast prior to state testing. Teachers should be communicating the exact dates. This year state testing will be in ELA (Grades 3-8), Math (Grades 3-8), and Science (Grades 5 and 8). These tests are computerized and each test takes about 2 hours (broken up into two parts that are given on different days). We schedule these state tests so that students only take one test on any given week. We appreciate your support to ensure they are ready to show us how much they have grown academically!

I want to congratulate our very own Elly Dice who just recently was awarded the KSDE Horizon Award! This award is only given to the top 32 first year teachers in Kansas! Elly has been instrumental in leading Civic Engagement with our Jr High and it is clear very quickly how she truly cares for her students! Congratulations Ms. Dice!

Track season will be off and running beginning March 23rd. The first track meet is at Emporia Middle School at 3pm.



IMPORTANT DATE

Kindergarten Round Up is April 7th at 6:30p at NLC Elementary. Any student turning the age of 5 before or on August 31 is eligible. We would appreciate parents contacting the district office at 620 481 2085 or the school at 620-481-2086 to notify us of their attendance in Kindergarten next year so that we can ensure mailings and info are received.

Corey Wiltz

Counseling Comments

We have almost completed three nine weeks of the school year. The 8th graders are getting ready to discuss their first IPS (Individual Plans of Study) with their parents during parent/teacher conferences. A teacher or myself will be contacting each 8th grade parent to set up a time to meet. During the IPS, students will discuss their career profile which includes career interests, goals, post secondary options, and courses to take in high school.

An Individual Plan Of Study Is Not A Checklist!

An Individual Plan of Study is a living document that facilitates a conversation with a student regarding his or her future. At the very least, it includes:

1. Career interests identified by the student through an authentic career interest survey or assessment.
2. A roadmap based on the student's interests and talents and graduation requirements
3. Includes approved coursework for the student's educational and career goals
4. Includes developmentally-appropriate, work-based learning experiences.

The individual Plan of Study is most powerful when accompanied by meaningful conversation and activities that help the student identify and set goals.

The 6th graders took the Learner Profile Assessment and Matchmaker Assessment on Xello (former program called Career Cruising) to see what kind of careers they are interested in based on their likes and dislikes. In the upcoming weeks, they will add to their personal profile.

The 7th graders are beginning to add to their personal profiles in Xello. They will take the personality inventory in the near future.

The elementary students just finished up guidance lessons that have been focusing on Emotion Management. The students have discussed a three step process to Calm Down: Stop, Name Your Feeling, and Calm Down by taking belly breaths, counting, or positive self-talk. They've enjoyed the videos and songs that have gone along with the lessons. They also began their lessons and activities on career exploration in Xello. They will continue those lessons/activities once they return from spring break.

It has been busy in all grade levels from social emotional learning to career exploration. I'm sure the fourth nine weeks will be just as eventful.

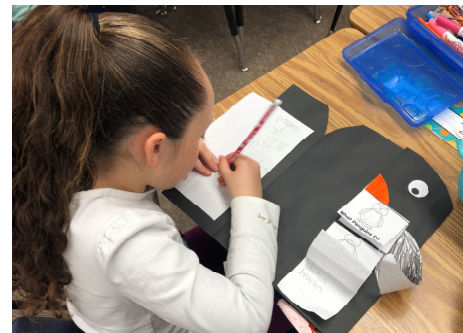
Aimee Landgren; K-8 School Counselor

First grade -Mr. Michelbook

Mr. Michelbook's first-grade class has been learning about penguins for the past month. The students have learned through many different formats, including books, magazine articles, and videos. We also did many different reading passages, called close reads, to gather information. After the students were done reading they were able to use highlighters to find the answers to text-dependent questions. The close reads taught them about what penguins eat, how tall they are, and how they move around.

The students were gathering all this information to put into their penguin foldables. The students learned about how and where penguins live, and what adaptations they need to survive. The students discussed how these adaptations helped our penguins survive. They also had opportunities to observe penguins in several zoos and aquariums through the country using webcams found on their websites.

The students favorite part was when they learned that an emperor penguin is the same size as a first grader. They were able to see for themselves as they stood next to a huge penguin model. Each student stood in front of the penguin and Mr. Michelbook marked how tall they were in comparison to the penguin. The students have been working hard to gather all this information about penguins. Ask your child one thing they learned about penguins.



From Mr. Stevenson's 6th Grade ELA classroom

It's crunch time! What a meaningful idiom to express what's going on in my language arts classroom right now. State testing is around the corner and we have so many standards to cover.

In the second week of February, 6th graders were given what's called the spring interim assessment. This is a sample of the state assessment which gives a prediction of how the kids will do on the "real" state assessment. I was impressed by the predictions made and am hopeful the students can reproduce those results in March.

On a day to day basis right, now we are working on discovering the main idea of a piece of writing and finding its theme. We are examining the purpose of a writing and its tone. We are discovering how to compare and contrast, what is involved in cause and effect, and identifying a problem and solution type text structure. We will soon be identifying an author's point of view.

The block schedule allows me to have a good amount of transitions during my time with the students. We can cover some literature for a time, transition into conventions, cover new vocabulary, and other new concepts. We have begun to read Where the Red Fern Grows, by Wilson Rawls. By reading this novel, we get to cover how a plot is formed and developed. We get to experience figurative language in its greatest form. The kids love the characters in this book. It is a book that many have claimed being responsible for turning them into lifetime readers.

So, to wrap this up, we are working our tails off getting prepared for state testing. The year goes by so fast. I'm enjoying getting to know all of the 6th graders. Thanks for your support of our school and the staff. It means a lot to know that we are acting as a team.

F.A.S.T.

Family and Schools Together!



Welcome

MARCH 31, 2020

5:45 – 7:45

NLC ELEMENTARY

GRADES PREK – 12

Plan to join us for a fun evening of pizza and student displays,
and learning about our School Redesign progress, Clubs and
Organizations, Preschool Info, and 8th grade Parent Meeting.

Watch for more information to come!

USD #251
North Lyon County School District
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