

Stanton Community Schools

Home & School CONNECTION! (Working Together for School Success)

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From the Superintendent's Desk

By Michael J. Sieh

Things I Won't Miss!!

Relax, I did not say people I won't miss, but things. You would think that I could come up a list of at least 20 things instantly, but the reality is that I love most challenges of being a superintendent and this article took some time to write.

My inspiration for this article came from the cartoon at the right of this article. As you can imagine, deciding inclement weather days is not high on a superintendent's list of favorite things to do. In fact, I would bet that it's near the bottom for most. Think about it! If you call off school, half the people, including students, are happy. The other half of people now must find babysitters, transportation, etc.

And of course, there are those days that the weather is predicted wrong. You call off school because of the forecast and the area receives no snow. Or, you have school and by ten o'clock the area is in a full blizzard.

Other items that make this decision tough are black ice, other schools pulling the plug too early or at the last moment, etc. Anyhow, this 5 a.m. decision is a job someone else can have.

Also making the dirty jobs list is student activities. From most people's perspective, this should be one of the easiest jobs. WAIT!! I find myself sitting at events hoping everything goes well. For starters, you don't want to mess up the Star-Spangled

Banner. Is someone here to sing it OR is the band playing it tonight? Is the PA system working? And that warmup song that just used a sexual innuendo, I hope no one heard it. STRESS!!! And now here comes someone who thinks I'm a plumber for he/she thinks I should be able to fix the toilet. YUCK for me, but for you, I now must get some more popcorn for the concession stand just ran out. I JUST WANT TO SIT HERE AND WATCH THE GAME!!

Government paperwork is not getting less, and technology just means you get to do more with less at a higher precision rate. In the beginning, the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) would send you a letter via the mail to let you know what reports must be completed. This usually created a little work but just came once a month.

Now, NDE and others send emails daily with expectations. And since reports are now submitted electronically, each report goes through a couple validation checks to ensure that you completed them accurately. If they don't pass validation, you get them back to do again.

One of my favorite reports is the final financial special education report for they want you to report the same data 3 or 4 different ways. And when things don't match, you can spend hours or days trying to get everything to reconcile.

Replacing quality staff tops my list of things I won't miss. With every hire, you try to improve your staff, similar to how a professional coach tries to improve his/her roster when a player leaves the team.

The staff's overall quality will decrease when replacing a highly skilled staff member. Anyone who has conducted interviews knows that you try to reduce your risk by doing thorough background checks prior to hiring. Even after all of this, it still seems to me that hiring is a 50/50 shot at getting a quality staff member back.

And to complicate things, we are in a shortage for most teaching areas. And, many applicants were of poor quality in his/her previous school.

Last, but absolutely the top of my list is struggling students with whom I can't seem to connect. Throughout my career, regardless of my job title, there are some students with whom it is hard to connect. I spend a lot of time thinking of ways that I could relate to the student so, in the end, I can offer them some help! I tend to pray for these students every day.

My educational wish would be that all students have a positive web of adults in their life to constantly serve as their support team. As a student, I don't think that I was hard to relate to, but I did have a huge web of positive adult support in my life!! Thanks to the adults in my web!!!

Reporters

Dr. Sieh Superintendent
Dr. Cunningham..... H.S. Principal
Mrs. Remm Elementary Principal
Mrs. Fernau..... Counselor
Mrs. Holoubek School Nurse
Mrs. Liekhus Librarian
Blake Furstenau FFA Reporter

Events Calendar

February 2

- Curriculum Review Day (School is in Session for All K-12 Students)

February 13

- School Board Meeting (7:00 p.m.)

March 3

- P/T Conferences (3:30 - 7 p.m.) - 1:20 p.m. dismissal

March 4

- P/T Conferences (3:30 - 7 p.m.) - 1:20 p.m. dismissal

March 6

- No School (P/T Comp Day)



"This is the superintendent. It appears to be quite a storm. We better call off school for today."

www.scs-ne.org
(402)439-2233

Happy Valentine's Day!

Questions??? Please Call!
Central Office - 439-2233
High School Office - 439-2250
Elementary Office - 439-2639

Connecting with Dr. Cunningham

By Dave Cunningham & Lindy Fernau

Norfolk Area Youth Leadership "Start" Summit

Stanton Community Schools 9-11 students will once again be attending the Norfolk Area Youth Leadership "Start" Summit: Sharing our Stories, on Friday February 7th at the Norfolk Middle School. Students will report to school at regular time on Friday morning. We will transport all students attending the summit by school bus. We will depart from the high school at 8:15 am. The summit goes from 9 am to 3 pm. This year's summit keynote speaker is Dr. Julia Garcia.

Dr. Julia Garcia creates safe spaces for a generation of voices to speak up, stand up, and rise up together. Dr. Garcia shares that 'We don't look like our stories', but 'What if sharing your real story could save a life?' The truth is, no one even knew she was overwhelmed with feelings of depression, anger, shame, and the pressure to be perfect, until it was almost too late. After sharing her real story with hundreds of thousands of students nationwide, she is now on a mission to give students a safe space to do the same. This is not your traditional lecture. It's an experience to help students...because you never know how sharing your story can help someone else through theirs. For more information please visit www.drjuliagarcia.com.

Breakout sessions will

Remember to Support the Mustangs During District and State Action in February!

follow the keynote speaker and students will be provided lunch at the summit. Breakout sessions will include engaging "Youth Centered" topics: A Leadership panel, Embracing Diversity, Suicide Awareness/Prevention, Social Media, Self Defense, Bullying, Personal Finance and many more.

This is a great opportunity for students to engage in some powerful conversations with each other and students from other schools, build leadership capacity, and learn new ideas for supporting and maintaining a positive school climate. Following the summit, students are encouraged to "pay forward" the positive lessons learned at the summit.

TeamMates celebrates mentors during National Mentoring Month

January was National Mentoring Month. Nationwide, programs honored mentors for their service and the impact they're making on youth. TeamMates' mission is to impact the world by inspiring youth to reach their full potential through mentoring.

- 1 in 3 young people are growing up without a mentor outside their family.
- TeamMates is a school-based program— meaning matches meet in school
- during the school hours, and during the school year.
- Mentors need to simply be there for their mentees. Matches play board games, shoot hoops, work on a craft, or just talk.
- TeamMates has tons of resources for mentors to feel successful throughout their mentoring journey.
- During the 2018-2019 school

Reminiscing with Mrs. Remm

By Sarah Remm

"In a world where you can be anything, be kind." ~ Jennifer Dukes Lee

Nice and kind. Words we use often when talking about how we should treat others. Did you know there is a difference between niceness and kindness? Being nice is defined as behaving in a way that society views as "nice". Being kind means acting out of a deeply rooted, genuine love for others and their well-being, not giving any thought to what society thinks.

It's time to shift our focus to kindness. Kindness should be evident every day of the year; however, there is a special day set aside in February known as *Random Acts of Kindness Day*, February 17th. It is a day that encourages people to really step up and do kind things for others. Kindness is contagious and brings

about positivity, so it just might catch on and continue all year long.

Working with children is a tremendously rewarding and fulfilling responsibility. Talking with and modeling for children what kindness looks like and sounds like is an opportunity for everyone, not just parents and school staff. Children learn important social and emotional skills that will influence them for the rest of their lives. How can we show kindness? Leaving positive notes for others to find, sharing a story, giving high fives, using manners, smiling, doing something unexpected for someone else. The list is endless, so get out there and spread some kindness!

Counselor's Corner

By Lindy Fernau

National Mentoring Month & Financial Aid Information

year, TeamMates served more than 10,000 youth across 170+ communities in Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, South Dakota and Wyoming.

- 98% of TeamMates mentees say they trust their mentors.
- Any child can benefit from a mentor. Mentees must share a desire to work with a safe, caring adult.
- **There is a positive correlation between a student looking forward to seeing their mentor and overall levels of hope, engagement and well-being.**

A personal thank-you goes out to the Mentors from Stanton for their time and dedication to fostering a positive relationship with a young person in our community: *Bob Chilcoat, Jeanette Davidson, Jessi Allen, Kathy Hall, Lisa Wilke, Tamy Bohac, Bobbi Vomacka, Joyce Kment, Nick Bentz, Gretchen Hupp, Dani Hadcock, Kody Hess, Brooke Pelster-Hess, David Kment, and Tim Reese.*

Please join them to support the cause and become a mentor with the Teammates mentoring program. It doesn't take much, just one visit a week for a minimum of 30 minutes. We currently have 18 students waiting for someone to step up and make a positive impact on their lives.

For more information about becoming a mentor or nominating a young person you feel could benefit from having another positive role model in their life, please see Mrs. Fernau at the high school, call her at 402-439-2250, Lisa Wilke at 402-920-2996, or sign up online at: teammates.org

Important Financial Aid Information for Seniors and Parents:

For those students who have applied to college and had their FAFSA information sent to that college, you will soon receive a Financial Aid Package

Please see **COUNSELOR**, page 4

Holoubek's Health Tips

By Lisa Holoubek

February is American Heart Month - is YOUR Heart Healthy?

Heart disease and stroke are the world's leading causes of death, responsible for approximately 17 million deaths annually. In the United States, heart disease affects nearly 1 out of every 3 adults, and the latest report from the American Heart Association states 48% of US adults have some form of cardiovascular issues (high blood pressure, stroke, heart failure, coronary artery disease to name a few). Decades of scientific research have proven that obesity, smoking, high blood pressure, diabetes, and high cholesterol all contribute to higher risk of developing serious cardiac complications.

The good news is that it's never too early OR too late to improve your heart health. Small changes, such as regular exercise and healthy eating, can make a big difference. The National Health and Human

Services Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommends two and a half hours per week of moderate physical activity for adults, and children ages 6-17 should get 60 minutes daily of moderate to vigorous physical activity.

As the incidence of heart disease increases as we age, it is vital to maintain overall good health, incorporating physical activity, a healthy body weight, balanced diet, and abstaining from smoking and tobacco products.

This month, challenge yourself to prioritize your health and get educated about your family history and risk factors for heart disease, and try to promote and practice healthy behaviors in your home. With some effort and education, individuals and families can help ensure a healthier future!

Book Fair Jungle: Elephant, Tigers and Books, OH MY!

(Liekhus) The Stanton Elementary Book Fair will be held in the elementary Friday, February 28th - Thursday, March 5th. Opening day (February 28th) will be a "preview day" for the classrooms. During this time each of the classrooms will get a sneak peak of the book fair. There will be no purchases made during this time. The book fair will officially open for business on Monday, March 2nd and remain open through Thursday, March 5th. Each of the classrooms will have the opportunity to shop during their scheduled library times. The Book Fair will be open for business 3:30 - 7:00pm on the evenings of Parent/Conferences.

(March 3rd-March 4th) Families are invited to come and shop during business hours. There will be a large assortment of scholastic books (popular titles) to choose from. Posters, journals, bookmarks, pens/pencils are just a few of the other items available. When making your

purchases, please make checks payable to Stanton Community Schools. Credit and debit cards will also be accepted.

Get the Book Fair app and shop the Online Fair directly from your device! You can view book details, including age, grade, and reading levels. Plus, you can purchase books directly from your Online Fair, and all orders ship



FREE to our school!

Also, you may purchase book/books for your child's/children's classrooms for them to enjoy in school. Let us take your shopping experience to a whole new level. Come check it out! A letter and book pamphlet will go home with the students prior to the book fair. Books make a great gift for any occasion. Welcome shoppers!!

STANTON FFA WEEK - FEBRUARY 24-28TH, 2020

By Blake Furstenau, FFA Student Reporter

Monday 24th

- Drive your tractor/truck to school day. (Must meet at the community building at 7:30 am.)
- Hat Day
- FFA -Elementary coloring contest (FFA members will hand out sheets at 8:15 am. and entries will need to be returned by Thursday) There will be a winner from each grade.



Tuesday 25th

- Staff Breakfast at both Elementary (location TBA) and High School (Ag Room) from 7:30 am-8:00 am.
- Officers wear jackets/all other members wear blue/gold
- Ag Literacy at the preschools from 8:30 am - 9:15 am.



Wednesday 26th

- Official Dress Day
- Group picture during advisory
- Ag Literacy at the elementary from 3:00 pm.-3:30 pm.



Thursday 27th

- FFA Member Breakfast (wear any FFA t-shirt to get a free hot breakfast in the Ag Room from 7:30 am-8:00 am.)
- Agri Science Fair at Norfolk Public School from 8:15 am-1:00 pm



Friday 28th

- Petting Zoo at the Shop from 8:30 am - 3:00 pm
- FFA members wear flannel



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Continued from Page 2

from the college. Most colleges do not send this through the mail, but it will be found on their college account online. A notice that the Financial Aid Package is ready to check may or may not be sent via email. Students will need to check their account periodically. This package will include the cost of attendance at the college and a list of what type of aid they are able to offer. This aid may include some or all of the following categories:

- 1. **Scholarships** - offered from the college (student does not have to pay back)
- 2. **Grants** - (student does not have to pay back)
- 3. **Work Study** - Student will have to apply for one of the on-campus jobs to receive this money as they work through the semester. This money is NOT available for tuition, books, fees, or room/board. It is money for any incidentals the student will need such as: travel expenses or food not part of a cafeteria plan.
- 4. **Loans** - This is money that the

student or parent has to pay back depending on which type is offered. There are also forms that need to be filled out separately for this type of aid.

- a. **Subsidized loan** - Federal government pays the interest on these loans while the student is still attending college, so the principal amount does not go up. This is in the **student's name** and payments start as early as 6 months after graduation or no longer enrolled in college.
- b. **Unsubsidized loan** - the government does not pay the interest each year. A student can pay the interest each year or have it applied to the principal and pay it 6 months after graduation or when no longer enrolled in college. This is also in the **student's name** and student's responsibility to pay it back.
- c. **Parent Plus Loan** - This loan is taken out in the **parent's**

name and will be the **parent's responsibility** to pay it back. The payments will start right away while the student is attending college and continue until the balance is paid.

One thing to remember is that a student will have the opportunity to accept or decline each type of aid offered. Also, if students are offered a certain amount of loan \$'s and they would like to borrow less, they can contact the financial aid office of that college and they can set up a new Financial Aid Package with the correct information for the student to sign. The college factors in quite a bit of money for incidental expenses that perhaps the student will not need or can be covered by working part time or from money that was saved. It is always a good idea to limit the amount of money that the student borrows. The loans are offered at a good interest rate but can really add up over a 4-year period and starting wages

may not be enough to cover the monthly payments. This is certainly something to consider as the student is accepting or declining the Financial Aid Package.

If you have completed the FAFSA, you might receive a verification notice from the college(s) you listed on your FAFSA requesting documents to verify your FAFSA information. The college will not process your financial aid until you provide required documents.

Local scholarships:

Seniors will have access to the local scholarships in February. Many of them are due March 1st or April 1st. If you are part of an organization that offers a scholarship each year, please contact Lindy Fernau at the high school to let her know if there will be any changes from last year. A current list of all scholarships can be found on the school webpage under guidance. It takes a few clicks to get there but the list is sorted by their due dates.

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