



The Knight Times

North Cedar Community School
District

March 2020 Issue

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Superintendent Dohmen's Message

First Legislative Funnel Update

The first legislative funnel is over. As of February 21st, our legislators have now completed six weeks of the 14-week legislative session. After today, most of the bills from both sessions will be inactive, as they must come out of their original committee to survive the funnel. There was no public movement on Supplemental State Aid this week. The bill, as amended and passed by the House at 2.5%, is in the Senate, but they took no action this past week. The deadline of setting SSA within 30 days of the Governor submitting her budget is over. Additionally, the Governor has not yet signed the Transportation and Per-Pupil Equity legislation. Many believe this will be signed at the same time as the SSA. The Governor's proposal for SSA was also 2.5%.

On Monday, February 17th, the House Education Committee voted out four bills for consideration by the full House that directly impact PK-12 schools. HF 2048, preschool eligibility would make children who turn five between March 15 and September 15 eligible for the state-wide preschool program. It passed on a 15-7 vote. HF 2169 was moved with a 12-11 vote. It requires students to complete a course on bleeding control by the end of high school to graduate (a waiver may be signed for students not physically able to complete the course). HSB 642 removes the proficiency requirement in reading, math and science in order to participate in the senior year plus program and leaves the readiness assessment to the community colleges. It was estimated that with the new Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress changes, nearly 14,000 students who would have previously met the proficiency criteria no longer would meet the criteria. It passed 22-1. HSB 644 would allow a community college instructor to teach CTE classes if they have an Associate of Arts degree in a field that doesn't require a higher degree and if they have 3,000 hours of work experience in the field. It passed 23-0. CTE areas are hard to fill positions in our schools.

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Message from Principal Horman

Behavior/Social Emotional:

Students and staff participated in our January Knight pride afternoon. The focus of the afternoon was uniqueness. Groups discussed what it meant to be unique and why it was okay for each person to be themselves. The groups then listened to a story together and enjoyed a snack while creating their own unique snowflakes.

We had our third PBIS assembly of the year in Lowden. We handed out awards to students who were nominated for demonstrating respectful behavior. Several students also redeemed their “Wheel of fun” certificate which they had purchased off our PBIS cart with tickets they had earned. We concluded the assembly with Valentine's Day themed minute to win it games.

Fast Data Meeting:

Our FAST data teams met with all classroom teachers to discuss FAST Winter data. Our goal continues to be to provide instruction and interventions that meet each student's individual needs. We also reviewed a new growth report that the FAST system released. This report allows us to easily see the growth trends of all students to ensure we are meeting each of their individual needs. FAST scores were also shared with parents during parent teacher conferences.

Core Reading Instruction Initiative:

Our K-3 and title teachers have met to discuss their coaching plan with the instructional coaches and Melissa Scherkenbach (literacy consultant). They reviewed the instructional component goal they each chose to focus on. The group then set up a time to observe the teacher in the classroom. A follow up meeting was also set up for additional support connected to the goal area identified by the teacher.

Parent Teacher Conferences:

We had a great attendance rate for our winter parent teacher conferences. 94% of parents attended the Lowden conferences and 93% of parents attended the Mechanicsville conferences.



Message from Principal Bendixen

Greetings to the North Cedar community!

We had our second round of Parent Teacher conferences on February 12-13 and had about 60% attendance. While that doesn't compare to the high attendance rate at the elementary, it is an improvement over prior years when less than 40% is a typical attendance rate during February conferences. We are definitely headed in the right direction and are hoping to see attendance continue to improve in the years ahead.

Last month, I shared some general information about the progress we have made this year on each of our building initiatives. Read on for more details about each of these initiatives including plans for professional development and things we've implemented to improve the learning environment for our students.

Standards Based Grading (SBG): With all courses converted to the SBG grading system, we are turning our attention to "fine tuning" our implementation. For the remainder of this school year, we will use professional development time to focus on the following topics related to SBG instruction and assessment:

Instruction focused on priority standards

- Planning with the standards in mind
- Purchasing resources to support instruction that is aligned with standards and working on vertical alignment
- Making it clear to students which standards are being focused on - in the classroom and in the grade book

Rubrics, CFAs (departmental work)

- Developing rubrics/proficiency scales
- Writing test questions that address the proficiency levels
- Developing comprehensive assessment systems including pre-assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments

Re-assessment policies

- Establishing these policies and making students aware
- Using MTSS (KnightTime) to focus on priority standards

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS): During Junior High Knight Time, students have been working on projects that promote research, collaboration, and organization. One of the projects students have worked on during this time is field trip planning. In this group, students work with grade level peers to plan a class field trip. Teachers start by giving each group the criteria and parameters for their trip. Then students break into small groups and research different cities they'd like to visit and attractions they'd like to see in that city. They then present their city proposal to the group and we vote on which city we'd like to visit. After they've selected a city, they start researching specific attractions and organizing important information about those attractions. By the end of the 6 week project, students will have chosen a city, 2-3 attractions to visit on the trip, planned an itinerary for the field trip, and written a letter explaining the trip to parents. Once each advisory has had a chance to work on this project, we will select one 7th grade and one 8th grade field trip to actually plan and attend by the end of the year.

One of the goals we have as a staff is "Nobody Fails!" We are getting closer and closer to achieving this goal each semester (see chart on page 5). At the end of 1st semester this year, there were 7 high school students on the failure list with a total of 15 Fs. Three of the students have very poor attendance and that accounts for 10 of those Fs. That leaves 4 students that failed for other reasons, including refusing to complete the work assigned. Long story short, if students attend school and put forth some effort, the staff will make sure they pass their classes!

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Superintendent's Message

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The Senate Education Committee also met on Monday. An on-line learning bill, SF 2004 passed 14-0. It would create a standing appropriation of \$500,000 along with a requirement to include a Chinese language option for high schoolers. SF 2101 passed 11-3. It would require schools to display the first sentence of the preamble of the Declaration of Independence in every school.

Both Education Committees met Wednesday, the 19th of February. The House Education Committee voted out five bills. HF 2120, suicide prevention requires the DE to develop protocols to help schools implement the suicide prevention requirements. HF 2370 requires the DE to establish a workgroup to study the possibility of a poverty weighting supplemental for schools. HSB 666 would allow the at-risk supplemental to be increased to 5% of a school district's regular program cost after approval by the SBRC. HSB 598, classroom behaviors passed on a 12-10 vote after it was amended. This is the "room clear" bill we have been watching and providing input. It has been a very collaborative process up to this point. There is a lot going on in this bill.

The Senate Education Committee voted out three bills that impact PK-12. SF 2066 concussion care providers includes occupational therapists as health care providers for treating concussions at sporting events. SF 2138 protects school employees from being fired or disciplined for protecting the First Amendment rights of students. Lastly, SF 2235 requires the Board of Educational Examiners to adopt rules on an advanced dyslexia endorsement for teachers, establishes the Iowa Dyslexia Board, and directs the DE to hire a consultant to work on dyslexia issues.

On Thursday, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved an amended version of SF 2190 room clears. The Senate's version is the preferred version of the bill. It passed Appropriations on a vote of 19-1.

Remember, it takes a lot for a bill to become a law. For all of the mentioned legislation we are still in the early stages. Once out of committee these bills must still be brought before the full chamber on both the House or Senate side, and they have to pass both chambers in identical form before going to the Governor for final approval. A lot can happen along the way. Once the session is over, I will share the signed bills that directly impact PK-12 public education. Please stay engaged, and please continue to provide input to your local legislators. Your voice is very powerful. Iowa Bill Tracking can be found at <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation>.

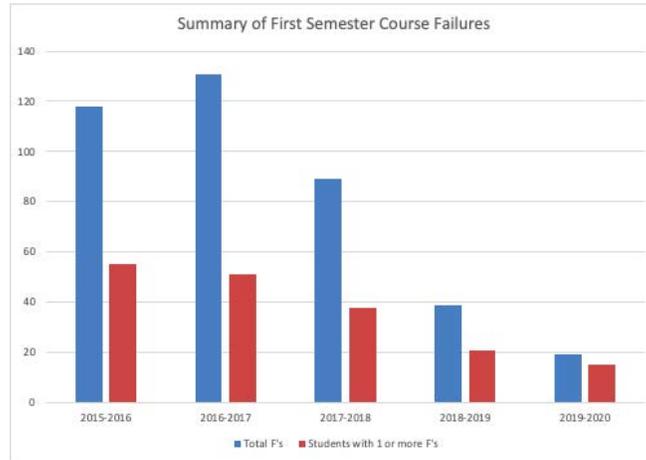
February Board Meeting Highlights

Each month the North Cedar School Board will be sharing two or three key highlights of our monthly board meetings. These takeaways are messages that the board collectively feels are important for the public to know. Here are the highlights from the February 17, 2020, meeting:

1. **Parent-Teacher Conference Attendance.** Over the past three years, elementary parent-teacher conference attendance has been over 90%. Kudos to our families for taking a vested interest in your child's education.
2. **Daycare Availability.** Since the beginning of the school year, North Cedar has been operating full-service daycares in Lowden and Mechanicsville for children ages infant to preschool. Before- and after-school programming is also available for elementary students. These centers fulfil a vital need in our communities and the support of the entire district is needed for the long term success of this service.
3. **Legislative Relationships.** Building good relationships with our elected leaders is an important role of the superintendent and school board. During the current state legislative session, Supt. Dohmen and board members are in regular contact with our representatives and senators with focuses on the following topics: mental health, transportation funding, student funding and childcare/preschool opportunities. Solid legislative relationships are critical to getting the support North Cedar needs to meet the evolving needs of our students.

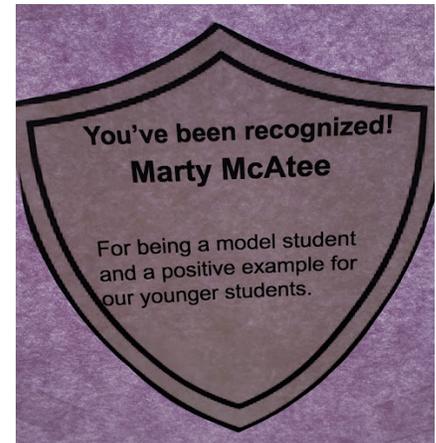
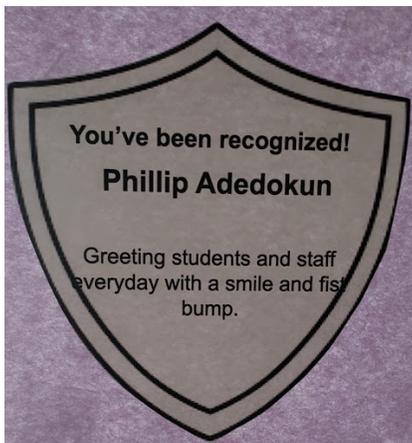
To view the full agenda and attachments of North Cedar School Board meetings, click the Online Board App button at https://northcedarstu.org/Board_of_Education. Meeting minutes are also posted online following each meeting.

Principal Bendixen's Message
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Note: The chart includes Kirkwood course failures which I did not include in my comments above.

Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS): This year we added “UKnighted” awards to our PBIS incentive plan. While the tickets we hand out are for meeting expectations, the UKnighted awards are for students that go above and beyond our expectations. The goal is for each staff member to nominate one student each semester for an award. The students receive a shield describing why they were nominated and their names are placed in a drawing for a special prize at our quarterly assemblies. The UKnighted awards are displayed on the windows of the school’s front entrance. A few examples are below:



Social Climate: The Social Team has continued offering book study opportunities to the staff this school year. Last fall several teachers collaborated on a study of "What Great Teachers Do Differently, 17 Things That Matter Most". Each session began with the reading of chapters followed by discussion. Each chapter in the book had a corresponding study guide query along with it that guided the conversations. There were weekly expectations to implement the new learning. Here are some highlights of the group’s learning...

- When the very best teachers say something, they mean it. They do not depend on a commanding presence or a booming voice to manage their classrooms; rather, students respect their authority because they communicate expectations clearly and follow through consistently.
- Students know the difference between right and wrong and generally want the teacher to address inappropriate behavior in a dignified and respectful manner.
- Great teachers do not automatically react every time a student steps a little out of line.
- Great teachers do not try to prove who is in charge of their classrooms; everyone already knows.
- Great teachers always treat students as if the student's parents were in the room. They deal with students who disrupt learning, but they do it respectfully.

The second book study of the year began on Wednesday, February 19th. This time around the selected book is “Hacking Leadership” by Joe Sanfelippo and Tony Sinanis.

North Cedar Activities & Lunch Calendar

March 2020

Mon., March 2:

Lunch: Elem.: Breaded Chicken Patty; Jr/Sr High: Orange Chicken

Tues., March 3:

Lunch: Elem.: Orange Chicken; Jr/Sr High: Pork Carnitas or Chicken Fajitas

Wed., March 4:

Lunch: Breaded Pork Chop

Thurs., March 5:

Lunch: Sloppy Joe
7pm 7-12th Band Concert @ Jr/Sr High Gym

Fri., March 6:

Lunch: Elem.: Cheese Pizza Slice; Jr/Sr High: Personal Pan Pizza

Mon., March 9:

Lunch: Crispito
2pm Varsity Girls Track Meet @ UNI

Tues., March 10:

Lunch: Hot Ham & Cheese
2pm Varsity Boys Track Meet @ UNI

Wed., March 11:

Lunch: Elem.: Popcorn Chicken; Jr/Sr High: Hot Dog or Cheddarwurst

Thurs., March 12:

Lunch: Chicken Alfredo
7pm 7-12th Choir Concert @ Jr/Sr High Gym

Fri., March 13:

Lunch: Elem.: Pizza Crunchers; Jr/Sr High: Chicken Patty

Sat., March 14:

SEIBA Honor Band Festival @ Durant HS
St. Ambrose Honor Band Festival

Mon., March 16:

No School--PD Day
6pm School Board Meeting @ Jr/Sr High

Tues., March 17:

Lunch: Elem.: Walking Taco; Jr/Sr High: BBQ Rib or Chicken Bacon Club
7th-11th Grade Iowa Assessments

Wed., March 18:

Lunch: Elem.: BBQ Rib; Jr/Sr High: Chicken Drumstick
7th-11th Grade Iowa Assessments

Thurs., March 19:

Lunch: Cavatelli
5-8pm Solo/Ensemble Contest (5th-8th grade) @ Jr/Sr High

Fri., March 20:

Lunch: Elem.: Grilled Chicken or Fish Sandwich; Jr/Sr High: French Dip or Fish Sandwich

Mon., March 23:

Lunch: Totally Tacos

Tues., March 24:

Lunch: Chicken Tenders
7pm NHS Induction Ceremony and Reception @ Jr/Sr High

Wed., March 25:

Lunch: French Toast Sticks

Thurs., March 26:

Lunch: Salisbury Steak
FBLA State Leadership Conference in Coralville

Fri., March 27:

Lunch: Mac & Cheese
FBLA State Leadership Conference in Coralville
3:30-5:30pm Jr. High Dance @ Debbie Harms Theater, Clarence
4:30pm Varsity Girls and Boys Conference Track @ University of Dubuque indoor track

Sat., March 28:

FBLA State Leadership Conference in Coralville

Mon., March 30:

Lunch: Elem.: Corn Dog or Cheddarwurst; Jr/Sr High: Orange Chicken
4pm Varsity Girls Golf Meet vs Monticello @ 3-30 Golf & Country Club
4pm Varsity Boys Golf Meet @ Monticello Golf Course

Tues., March 31:

Lunch: Spaghetti
4:30pm Varsity Girls Track Meet @ Tipton City Park
4:30pm Varsity Boys Track Meet @ Tipton City Park

On Wednesday, February 26, 74 sophomores and juniors went to the Tipton County Fairgrounds to participate in the Cedar County Career Fair. There were several businesses from the area available for students to connect with to learn more about their careers and potential summer jobs/internships. There was a drawing for students who connected with 10 or more businesses. Jaxon Sander, Jacob Sander, and Karly Cerda were the winners of Casey's gift cards!



The mission of North Cedar Community School District, in partnership with its community and staff, is to ensure a safe and caring environment for each student, providing the essential knowledge, values, skills, and attitudes to create lifelong learners who are responsible, contributing, and productive citizens in a changing and increasingly diverse world.

Everything we do at NCCSD is for our students, and we encourage them all to take part in the enrichment and extracurricular opportunities for which they are eligible.

- Athletics for junior high school and senior high school students
- Fine arts activities for 5th through 12th graders
- Extracurricular clubs and organizations for junior high and senior high school students
- Counseling services for all grades

An active, supportive community strengthens NCCSD. Parents and patrons who elect to get involved and support our students and their activities aid the district.

- Athletics Boosters bolster our student athletes and the athletics programs
- Encore Club supports our fine arts programs
- Knights Community Organization fosters the relationships between parent, student, staff, and community
- North Cedar Education Foundation provides financial support to help broaden the district's education opportunities

Postal Customer

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