

# NORTH LYON COUNTY



2024

PATRON NEWSLETTER



## Superintendent's Message

Dear North Lyon County Families,

I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas/New Year's holiday with family and friends. North Lyon County Schools are ready to begin the second semester. Teachers return on January 3<sup>rd</sup> and students return on January 4<sup>th</sup>.

As the 2024 legislative session is about to begin in Topeka, I would like to highlight the legislative priorities of Schools For Quality Education (SQE). Our school district is 1 of over 100 rural school districts in Kansas that are members of SQE. SQE advocates for small and rural school districts. The five goals of SQE are the following:

- To provide quality educational opportunities for all children in Kansas.
- To oppose further Kansas unified school district consolidation without the approval of the patrons involved.
- To pursue the quality of excellence in education.
- To give identity, voice, and exposure to the particular quality of rural schools.
- To enhance the quality of life unique in the rural community.

SQE's advocacy statements for 2024 include the following highlights:

- SQE supports a school funding formula that creates efficiencies through funding predictability; directs funds to all-day Kindergarten and Early Childhood; and fully funds the excess costs of special education and all other legislative mandates.
- Tax policy required to fund schools should be balanced, fair, and appropriate in order to maximize each student's potential. SQE opposes all efforts to unduly shift school funding to local taxpayers. This includes opposing vouchers, education savings accounts, and tuition tax credits by taking funds from public education and give to schools that are not required to serve all students.
- SQE supports the management of public schools under local Boards of Education, including setting the curriculum, staffing, financial management, and policies.
- SQE supports local control in any decision regarding consolidation.
- SQE supports the current non-partisan election of school board members.
- SQE opposes the enactment of any additional unfunded mandates that would cause schools to continue to divert funds from other programs.
- SQE opposes the practice of "bundling" appropriations with unrelated policies, and proposals that have not received a committee hearing.

Matt Horton, USD 251 Board of Education President, was recently elected the President of SQE for the upcoming 2024-2025 school year.

At the December 13<sup>th</sup> Board of Education Meeting, Kiley DeDonder, chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, provided the board with an update on the work of the committee for the past 7 months. She shared that the committee voted unanimously to recommend a detailed facility study for USD 251. The most recent facility study was conducted by the P1 Group during the 2017-2018 school year. Kiley shared that the committee's thought that it's important to have the most up to date information on all school facilities for the committee to be thorough in their work. The board voted to enter into an agreement with DCS Services to conduct the study. The district is anticipating that the study will occur in the first six months of 2024.

Respectfully,

Robert W. Blair, Superintendent

**Attention!!** Calendar change for the next school year.



**Enrollment for all  
USD 251 Students for the  
2024-25 School Year will be  
held**



**JUNE 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> at NLC Elementary and NHHS.**

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# NLC/ELC Principal Recap

## Dear Parents, Guardians, and Patrons:

As we swiftly approach the winter break, it's an opportune time to reflect on the incredible journey we've had this semester. The halls of our school have been buzzing with the energy of students diligently working towards their educational aspirations.

A standout highlight of the semester has been the remarkable dedication of our students, evidenced by the numerous achievements that have graced our honor rolls. It's heartening to witness so many students not only setting ambitious educational goals, but also surpassing them with determination and hard work. Each name on the honor roll represents a story of resilience, commitment, and the pursuit of excellence.

### Honor Roll Pictures



Behind every successful student, there is a team of dedicated educators providing unwavering support and excellent instruction. Our teachers have continued to inspire and guide with passion, ensuring that the classroom remains a space where knowledge flourishes. Their commitment to nurturing the potential within each student is evident, and I have the privilege of witnessing these moments of excellence every day.

## Winter Music Concert

I am delighted to share the resounding success of our recent music concert on December 6th. It was a night filled with melodic enchantment and a testament to the incredible talents of our students, underscored by the exceptional leadership of Mr. Reist.

Our choir took center stage, and their performance was nothing short of enchanting. The harmonies and dynamics they achieved were not only a treat to the ears, but a true reflection of the hard work and dedication they've put into perfecting their craft. The choir's ability to convey emotion through song left a lasting impression on everyone in the audience.

Equally impressive was the instrumental prowess displayed by our band. Each note played resonated with precision and passion, showcasing the commitment of our talented musicians.

Our K-5 concert did not disappoint the packed house of parents, grandparents, siblings and friends. The students filled the gym with joyful Christmas songs. Great performance!



## Sports update

**Boys Team Dominates with 5 Wins:** Our junior high boys' basketball team has demonstrated exceptional skill and teamwork throughout the season. With 5 victories under their belt, they have navigated the court with finesse, leaving a trail of success in their wake. The upcoming games provide them with an opportunity to build on this momentum and leave an indelible mark on the season.



**Girls Team Shows Resilience with 3 Wins:** The junior high girls' basketball team has exhibited unwavering determination and resilience, securing 3 wins so far. Their commendable efforts on the court have not gone unnoticed, and as they enter the final stretch of the season, we're confident they will continue to showcase their prowess.

**Countdown to the League Tournament:** As the regular season draws to a close, all eyes are on the league tournament. The teams are preparing for the pinnacle of competition, eager to showcase their skills and bring home victories that will be remembered for years to come. Let's rally behind our junior high athletes as they face the challenges that lie ahead.



8th Grade Recognition on Jan. 4th: Mark your calendars for a special evening on January 4th, as we come together to celebrate the achievements of our 8th-grade extracurricular participants. The halftime of the boys' game will serve as the backdrop for this recognition, a moment to honor the dedication and growth of these exceptional students. Join us in applauding their hard work and stewardship. As we cheer on our junior high basketball teams in the remaining games and the league tournament, let's also show our support for the 8th-grade players during their recognition on January 4th. Together, we make this season memorable and inspiring for our young athletes. Go team!

## Our Cheer Squad

It's with immense pride and joy that we take a moment to shine the spotlight on our extraordinary cheer squad, a beacon of enthusiasm and talent within our community. For the past two years, Coach Petersen has been the driving force behind the success of our young ladies, instilling not just cheerleading skills but also valuable life lessons and team spirit. Her unwavering dedication has truly transformed our squad into a tight-knit, well-organized unit.

Under Coach Petersen's guidance, our cheerleaders have not only perfected their routines but have also embraced a culture of discipline, perseverance, and mutual support. The results speak for themselves—the team's performances have been nothing short of spectacular. A heartfelt thank you goes out to Coach Petersen for her tireless efforts and commitment. It's coaches like her who mold not just athletes, but empowered and confident individuals ready to take on any challenge. Your hard work has not gone unnoticed, and we are incredibly grateful for the positive impact you've made on the lives of these young athletes.



Happy New Year

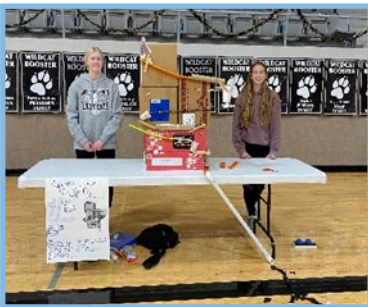
Mr. Hampton  
ELC/NLC Principal

# HAPPENINGS AT HEIGHTS

As a new year begins from a calendar perspective, we just keep on rolling along from the school perspective. One semester gone and one to go! Wow, how many great things have occurred for our kids, our staff and community over the past few months of school. When we look at the multitude of things our students and staff are involved in, it makes you step back for a moment and admire the commitment our students and staff have for each other. Whether it is within the classroom, on the field or court, or at events for various of activities; our staff and students are busy all the time. I cannot thank our staff, patrons and parents enough for all the support of our students and their activities through the fall semester.

December, like every other month of school was busy, busy, busy. From the start of winter athletic competitions, to scholars bowl, club activities, events, and the daily work of classes our kids didn't seem to have a spare moment during December.

**RUBE-GOLDBERG PROJECTS:** Students in physical science showed off their engineering skills as they completed their Rube-Goldberg projects. Students were to design a project demonstrating the use of simple machines to complete a task. Physics students along with BOE members had the opportunity to judge the projects and offer feedback. Great Job Students!



**FORENSIC SCIENCE:** Students within Forensic Science class were involved in a week long crime scene investigation. Students had to observe, gather evidence and evaluate the evidence to identify victim and perpetrator in a mock crime scene. Evidence was gathered from fingerprints, blood splatters/smears, foot impressions, as well as others to help in the identification process.



Our scholars bowl team has been very successful from the start of the season. Finishing in the top 3 in several tournaments so far, the participants have been fantastic. With so many of them involved in other activities, it is sometimes a hodge podge of who is or isn't competing on a given day. However, they all have seized each opportunity and represented NHHS with great pride. Keep up the good work. January will keep them busy again with several tournaments before a little break leading into league, regionals and hopefully an opportunity to compete at state.

**ORGANIZATIONS:** The holiday season is always a busy time for our clubs and organizations.



National Honors Society hosted the annual Senior Citizen’s Dinner on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Over 100 senior citizens joined NHHS students for the dinner. A new twist to the dinner was added this year and hopefully for years to come. NHHS Ambassadors were implemented as part of the dinner. NHHS upperclassmen were selected as ambassadors to sit and engage in conversation with our senior citizen attendees. This gave our guests as well as our students the opportunity to share stories or just ask questions between generations. For our students it was a chance to “disengage” from technology, tik-tok, snap-chat etc. and have real conversations with individuals that have so much to share. I hope our guests got as much out of this new twist as our students did.



**FCCLA/FFA: Adopt a Family**

The two organizations worked together to sponsor their annual adopt a family. Money was donated by students and staff to help provide for a family in the North Lyon County Community. Students were encouraged to donate as part of a competition between staff and students for some “dress ups” on December 20<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to our staff and students who graciously volunteered to dress up as either: Rudolph, Santa, Ms. Claus, A present, an elf or the Grinch. The “winner – the Grinch” individual had the most money donated in their name for the competition. We won’t say who got to be the Grinch – but I’m sure it’s no surprise!



**HOSA: Food Drive**

HOSA conducted a holiday food drive for the local food pantry. Seminar students brought in non-perishable items for donation. The winning seminar was awarded a prize from HOSA. This drive generated over 550+ items for our local pantry. Thanks to HOSA and everyone who donated. Just another case of our students, staff and community coming together to support such a worthy cause.

**FCA:**

We continue to have a great group of kids involved in our newly established FCA program. A great club for students to express opinions and share their values as well as an opportunity for great fellowship. Recently, they conducted their Christmas party and showed off their cookie decorating skills.



**Athletic News**

Basketball and wrestling began competitions starting on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December. Basketball kids are working hard to be competitive each and every night out. Although the scoreboard has not always been in our favor, improvement is evident. With the holiday break and some extended practice time we look for continued improvement as we move into 2<sup>nd</sup> semester competition. We currently have 7 individuals wrestling through our cooperative agreement with Council Grove. Our participants continue to work hard to improve and have had descent success in the young season. We look forward to continued success when we start back up in January.

Hopefully everyone had a chance to recharge and refresh for 2<sup>nd</sup> semester, I know first semester was incredibly busy with our students and staff doing fantastic things. I am sure 2<sup>nd</sup> semester will be even better. We are excited to see what the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester brings with continued success for NHHS students.

Jan. 5	Basketball vs. Central Heights
Jan. 9	Basketball @ Mission Valley Scholars Bowl @ Paola
Jan. 10	USD 251 Board of Education Meeting
Jan. 11	Wrestling vs. Rock Creek @ Council Grove
Jan. 12	Basketball @ Lyndon
Jan. 13	Wrestling @ Topeka High
Jan. 15 – 20	Flint Hills Shoot-out @ White Auditorium / Emporia
Jan. 19	Wrestling @ Council Grove Tournament

Jan. 23	Basketball vs. Rural Vista <b>Queen of Courts</b>
Jan. 24	FFA @ Paola
Jan. 25	Wrestling @ Hillsboro Scholars Bowl @ Central Heights
Jan. 26	Basketball @ Herington
Jan. 27	Wrestling @ Fredonia <b>Winter Ball @ 8pm</b>
Jan. 30	Basketball vs. Burlingame
Jan. 31	District FBLA Conference @ Topeka



- ◆ Queen of Courts date change to January 23rd
- ◆ Winter Ball date change to January 27th



Dental screening

**January 16th at NLC**

# Building Information

If you have any questions or need assistance with school related issues, they will be glad to help you. The administrator's names and school phone numbers are as follows:

**Robert W. Blair, Superintendent of Schools: (620)481-2085**

**Dave Watkins, Northern Heights High School Principal: (620)481-2087**

**Robert Hampton, NLC /ELC Principal: (620)481-2086**