

OCTOBER 2022 / NOVEMBER 2023

Riverside Public Schools

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Supt. Stephanie Kaczor • Cedar Site Principal Deb Brownfield

• Spalding Site Principal Sarah Nordhues • HS AD Dan Wolken • MS AD Carter Camp



RIVERSIDE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Cedar Rapids, NE | Spalding, NE



Holiday Breaks

Fall Break Oct. 19 and 20
for PK-6 and Oct 20 for 7-
12

Thanksgiving Break Nov.
22, 23, and 24

Come join us Tuesday Oct 17, in the Cedar site MPR for Riverside's Got Talent!!
Hope to see you there!

Riverside Public School



Home of the Chargers



From the Desk of the Superintendent

By Ms. Kaczor

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Happy Fall! What an exciting time of year for educators, students, and parents. It feels good to get back into a routine and it is fun to look forward to a year filled with possibilities. With classes in full swing and fall activities underway it makes it a very busy time of year. Thanks to the support of our wonderful staff, students, families, and communities, we are off to a great start.

Throughout the summer and beginning of the school year, we had so many staff that went above and beyond to get our buildings and campuses in extraordinary shape. The Spalding campus went under a major renovation to construct a glorified breezeway to connect all buildings on our campus. This allows our preschool students to be connected to the rest of the campus without having to go outdoors and also a great gathering area when you enter for home games without entering and being right on the gym floor! This project was designed and completed by our very talented Dennis Weltruski. We are so fortunate to have him on staff and thank him for his time and talents in our district. Our Cedar site had carpet replaced in various areas and some "fix-its" around the campus. We are so grateful for Chris Slevin and his leadership at the Cedar campus as head of maintenance. We thank Tina Smith, Tammy Iburg, Paul VanDeWalle, Carol Ryckman, Ashtyn Heikes, Dalton Rankin, Melissa Weltruski, Barb Newquist, and Mary Bopp for all their hard work and dedication over the summer to help complete these projects and for all the upkeep of our campuses. From cleaning, waxing floors, moving classrooms, mowing, weed control, re-doing sidewalks, laying carpet, new construction and renovations, maintaining and installing technology systems and devices, updating calendars and schedules, and the list goes on and on! Our campuses have never looked better and we are so grateful for these individuals.

RPS starts the year with a new building principal at the Cedar site and nine new staff members. Tricia Martinsen takes the role of Cedar site principal and we are so excited for her to take this new role. Tricia is a Cedar Rapids alumna and has occupied various roles in our district since the 1996 school year.

Continue to the next page

Tricia started as a paraprofessional, and moved to classroom teacher, Title I Instructor, to now principal. Congratulations Tricia! New staff to our district consist of Dori Kennedy as a Math and History instructor at our middle school, Liz Martinsen as our title teacher and interventionist at the Cedar site, Diana Valasek and Mellissa Bloom as paraprofessionals, Lydia Ryan as our Cedar site school nurse, Wyatt Pfeifer and Sam Polk as assistant football coaches, Rita VanDeWalle as our cross country coach, and Jade Valasek as a speech-language pathologist contracted through ESU10. We are also excited to have McKeillie Ziehmer as a student teacher at our Cedar site throughout the first semester as well. We welcome these individuals and their families to our district and are excited about the energy and enthusiasm they bring to Riverside Public School.

Along with new staff members, we also welcome 13 new K-12 students and their families to the district. We also welcomed 36 of our youngest Chargers to school on August 22nd as they began their educational journey as preschoolers. This rounds out our student enrollment for the 2023/24 school year as of September 1st at 248 students.

At the September Riverside Board of Education meeting, the 2023-2024 budget was approved. The district saw a 5.6% increase in district valuations. The board of education approved a 53.06 cent levy. This is a 3-cent or 5.6% decrease over the past year. The board voted to decrease the tax asking to \$4,595,959 which is a \$181 decrease from the previous year. With our previous year's levy of 56.03 cents, we were in the bottom 10% of the lowest levies in the state. We predict our new levy of 53.06 cents, will have Riverside in the bottom 5% of the lowest levies in the state of Nebraska.

Assessment and data are important pieces to school systems in today's world. Technology and social and emotional support are essential parts as well. As we continue to grow in these areas and receive data regarding our growth as a district, we will keep you well informed. We anticipate district trends and demographic data to be released in late October from the Department of Education. We will share all of this data with the public at that time.

We are excited to be back in school and are looking forward to this 2023-2024 school year and all that it brings. There will be many great accomplishments that our staff and students will achieve this year and we are thrilled you are a part of the journey with us.

Here's to growth, learning, success,
and a whole lot of fun along the way!



1st row-- Denny Bloom, Kyle Berger, Pete Asche, Sherri Kelley, Ari Ray, Tiffany Holka, Mary Auten, Meridee Heikes, Liz Martinisen

2nd row- Steve VanDeWalle, Erin VanDeWalle, Rachel Usasz-Keber, Cecilia Baldwin, Angie Pfeifer, Kim Webb, LaTravia Dobson, Lacey Berger, Peg Ray, Sammi Molt

3rd row- McKeilie Ziehmer (student teacher), Gladys Asche, Jade Valasek, Sarah Feik, Dori Kennedy, Lisa Hamling, Calen Choyeski-Wood, Nanda Armatys, Kelly Kolar, Lisa Thayer

4th row- Cherry Plagmann, Diana Valasek, Heidi McManaman, Sharon Bennett, Tammy Iburg, Tina Smith, Brody Kelley, Cory Valasek, Mitch Glesinger

5th row- Tricia Martinsen, Julie Rankin, Melissa Weltruski, Nancy Hendrickson, Sherri Molt, Sarah Nordhues, Cathy McConkey, Jayne Nelson, Andrea Jazwick

6th row- Chris Slevin, Tana Dozler, Malisa Ragar, Dennis Weltruski, Mellissa Bloom, Scott Schmieding, Carter Camp, Dan Wolken, Amber Prososki

7th row- Deb Slevin, Angie Langer, Datrece Voichoski, Stephanie Kaczor

Not pictured - Barb Newquist, Mary Bopp, Carol Ryckman, Janet Feik, Lydia Ryan, Tom Armatys, Lori Beeson, Mike Morgan, Kallen Ryan, Rita VanDeWalle, Wyatt Pfeifer, Sam Polk

Safety and Security

By Supt. Stephanie Kaczor

School safety and security are at the forefront of Riverside's day-to-day initiatives and we value communication, preparedness, and positive relationships with our local emergency response entities, parents, and patrons. Riverside hosted its first safety informational meeting of the 23-24 school year for parents and community members on September 20th at the Spalding site campus. Safety and security protocols and procedures implemented at RPS were shared, trends of narcotics within our counties, as well as ways to work with you, the community, on how we can provide a safer community together.

For those who may not have been available to attend the fall safety informational meeting mentioned above, it will be repeated on February 14th @ 6 PM at the Cedar Site library. Both **parents and community members** are encouraged to attend.

Riverside will also host the Nebraska State Patrol on January 24, 2024, for our 7-12 students, parents, and community members from 8-9 AM. Trooper Monty Lovelace will provide an informational session on online safety, human trafficking, and drug trends across our state and local area.

If you are unable to attend these opportunities and are interested in more information, as always, please reach out to Superintendent Kaczor at stephanie.kaczor@riversideps.org.

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initiatives!

Student News

Spalding Site Preschool

Preschool has been off to a great start in Spalding! We are back to having 2 separate classes, with 3 year olds coming in the morning and 4 year olds coming in the afternoon. We were excited to have enough numbers of students to have separate classes again. So far this school year we have spend time learning our friends' names by playing games, as well as the rules and expectations of our classroom. We are continuing to implement the Pyramid Model this year and it is going very well. Through the pyramid model, we learn the expectations during all times of the day, as well as when we are at recess. The expectations are taught and re-taught on a daily basis to help children remember them.

We have just started a study that involves learning more about apples, leaves, fall and pumpkins. We will have a fall family night planned sometime in October. We love visitors, so if anyone ever wants to come visit preschool, let Mrs. Thayer know!



First grade read *Jalapeño Bagels* by Robert Cassilla, a story featuring a Mexican-Jewish-American Bakery. First grade made Chango Bars (a recipe discussed in the book) in their self-named bakery, "Chango Bar Factory"

Student News

4th Grade – Cedar Site

Wow! Time is going so quickly! It seems like we just started the new school year and now it is October! The fourth graders at the Cedar site have been busy. They made solar ovens out of pizza boxes and cooked s'mores, made a plan to help protect a house from a mudslide, made models of the layers of the Earth, and constructed tectonic plates out of graham crackers and marshmallow cream – and this was just in science! They have been just as busy in other subjects. In reading, they are learning about the migration of salmon and scarlet tanagers. Math has been focused on multiplicative and additive comparisons, and the all-important multiplication facts. In social studies, they are learning about the regions of the United States. They are writing paragraphs and learning capitalization rules in language arts, and also practicing cursive writing. A few weeks ago, they went to Fullerton to Conservation Day. This was a fun event where they learned about various things such as insects, monarch butterfly migration, and bird beaks. The fourth grade crew and myself would like to wish everyone a happy fall!

Student News

Homecoming 2023 was celebrated the week of September 5th through September 8th. There were various activities throughout the week. Staff and students dressed up for spirit days, hosted a parade in Spalding, played football and volleyball games, attended cross country meets, and held the dance to end homecoming week. The spirit days included Tuesday: Country vs Country Club, Wednesday: Rhyme Without Reason, Thursday: Throwback Thursday and Friday: Blue and Gold Day. Each class made a large spirit poster to hang up for display in the gym. Winners of the poster contest included High School: Sophomores, Middle School: 7th grade, Cedar Rapids site elementary: 2nd grade, Spalding site elementary: combination 2nd and 3rd grade. Friday was the big finale for the week. All students traveled to Spalding to decorate their class floats for the parade. The parade was announced on main street by Principal Sarah Nordhues. The class winners for the best decorated floats were Seniors: Tye Dozler and Hayden Clark with Mario and Bowser, High School: Sophomores with Time to Tuck in the Knights, Middle School: 8th Grade and Elementary: combination kindergarten and 1st grade. After the parade, there was a pep rally at the gym. The Peppers got the crowd fired up for the football game by doing numerous cheers and a game: dress up musical chairs. The Charger football team took on the North Central Knights in an afternoon game at 3:00 p.m. The final score was 54-26 in favor of Riverside. The Coronation began at 6:30 p.m. Friday night with the senior march followed by the attendants from each class. Freshman attendants were: Tessa Weltruski daughter of Jeff and Sandy Weltruski and Santiago Gutierrez Son of Fernando and Yazmin Beltran; Sophomore Attendants were Addy Seamann daughter of Ryan and Katy Seamann and Bennett Novacek son of Shawn Novacek and Lara Swerczek and Junior Attendants were Caddilynn Cave daughter of Jordan Cave and David and Malerie Roan and Dane Schalk son of Joel and Dee Schalk. Riverside welcomed the past 2022 King, Mr. David Lozano son of Gerado and Norma Lozano. David is currently attending UNK pursuing a Physical Education degree. Our past 2022 Queen was Kacey Martinsen daughter of Brent and Tricia Martinsen. She was not able to attend due to her brother's wedding. Kacey is currently attending Southeast Community College in Lincoln pursuing a nursing degree. The one alumnus then crowned the new king and queen. The 2023 Riverside Homecoming King was Colton Bernt son of Denny and Carey Bernt and the 2023 Riverside Homecoming Queen was Addie Murphy daughter of Tony and Aprill Murphy. The students were served pizza, and homemade cookies and bars supplied by the student council members. The dance concluded at 10 pm.



Queen Addie Murphy and King Colton Bernt