

JEFFERSON JOURNAL

FEBRUARY 2026

- **10th**- 4th grade music concert at 6 pm at Jefferson
- **12th**- 12:20 dismissal for Parent/Teacher Conferences from 1 pm to 8 pm
- **13th**- No School
- **16th**- No School- President's Day
- **17th**- PTO meeting at 4:15 pm at Jefferson
- **25th**- 12:20 dismissal for inservice

MR. DECKER'S NOTES

This month showcases the 4th grade music program on February 10th. There will be one performance at 6:00 PM.

We are proud of our Jefferson fourth graders!!!

Anticipation always fills the air this time of year as to whether or not the GROUNDHOG forecasts an early SPRING or six more weeks of WINTER.

We have been discussing differences of opinions in school. As we all have them. My message to kids is being respectful to each other and our differences. As long as those differences aren't getting people into trouble, we try to help kids understand to be respectful and accepting whether our hair, eyes, or skin are a different color or whether someone likes yellow or someone likes purple better.

I always refer to February as the month of LOVE. This month features Jefferson Kindness Spirit Week (February 17-20). Tuesday, February 17th is Random Acts of Kindness Day. I hope all of you can display an act to help the world be a better place.

WE ARE ALL

W
Arrows

MR. DECKER'S NOTES

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Continue to encourage your child to get enough rest, hydrate, and start off each day with a good breakfast. An average of two days missed each month is considered to be chronically absent. At the end of January that would be about twelve days. Lessons in school cannot be recreated or made up during normal school time. Absences due to illnesses will be excused IF provided a written doctor's note excusing the absence. PEAs are when a parent calls in and says their child will not be in. This could be that your child is ill. Even if you do not give a reason, this is considered PEA. You have ten days of PEA. After ten we count the days as AU. Once the AU absences start, it is vital that there is communication between the home and principal.

Attendance habits are preparing our kids for the real world and work force. Missing school is missing opportunities to grow and learn. We get kids get sick; illnesses happen.

Do your best to make each day count!

Attendance Traveling Trophy

We will continue our monthly challenge of rewarding the classroom from each grade level with a traveling trophy filled with their favorite candies. January's winner were:

- 1st- Dr. Tisher
- 2nd- Mrs. Swenson
- 3rd- Mrs. Weber
- 4th- Mrs. Butler

Sincerely,

John J. Decker
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DR. DANIELSEN'S NOTES

As we get to the time of year when the winter weather is approaching, I am writing this column to remind everyone of how late starts, early dismissals, and no school day decisions are made. It is important that you know, as parents, that your child's safety is my utmost concern. I also want you to know that if you don't agree with my decision, you can keep your child home or come and pick your child up from school early. The best decision possible is made with the weather information that we have – we view several television stations, drive the roads, as well as talk with the National Weather Service.

Late Starts

Late starts are called for two reasons. The main reason is that we need more time to get the busses out on the country roads and we need the daylight for the roads in town and out of town to begin the plowing process. On a normal day, our bus drivers are ready to head out about 6:30-6:45 AM. When we have a 10:30 late start, that delays that time until 8:30 – 8:45 AM. The second reason is to “buy time”, to see if the weather is going to get better and improve to start at 10:30 AM. I know this sometimes causes concern because of day care situations for parents, but I do use the late start time to review the conditions and see if they are going to improve. If they are not improving, then a “no school” decision is made.

Early dismissals

Early dismissals in the winter are primarily called to get students home with inclement weather during daylight hours. We may use a 12:30, 1:30 or 2:30 early dismissal time.

No School – We call no school when either weather is too difficult to get children to school with our busses (typically in town roads are better), and/or the weather is predicted to become worse throughout the day. This decision begins about 4:30-5:00 AM with several of us driving the in-town roads and country roads. It also includes talking with meteorologists in Aberdeen about their predictions for snowfall, winds, etc. We make the best decisions possible, and sometimes the predictions are not 100% accurate.

Cold Temperatures

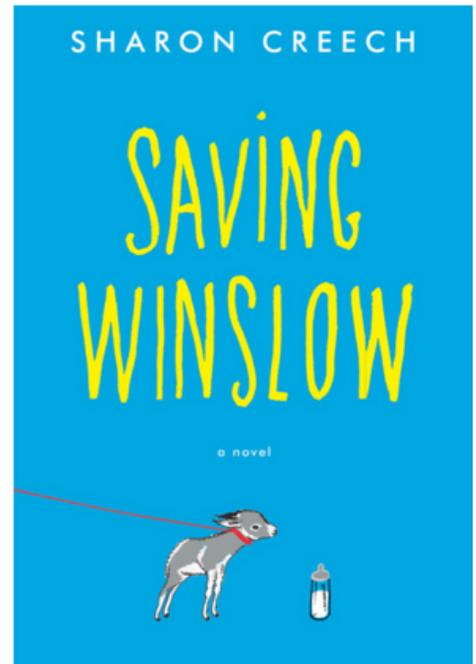
Regarding cold temperatures: We will not call school off for cold temperatures unless the air temperature gets to the 25 to 30 below mark. Our busses are well heated and will run fine unless it is in that range of air temperature (busses don't feel wind chill). We do keep our buildings open for students when it is cold. Students won't wait outside in the bus lines, playground, etc. on those days. Unfortunately, the television media sometimes plays into the hype of calling off school around the state. You can be assured that we will not bring students to school if we believe they are in danger. If they have to walk to school on those cold days, I would ask that you find neighbors and friends and ask if they can help give your child a ride (please plan ahead). If you believe it is too cold, you can keep your child home. Northeastern SD is one of the coldest parts of the state during the winter and if we called off for the two-three weeks of cold weather we wouldn't be in session any of those days – that is why we use the 25-30 air temperature mark decision. Remember to help your child(ren) dress appropriately for cold weather – hats, boots, mittens, coats.

Dr. Jeff Danielsen

SCHOLASTIC BOOK OF THE MONTH

Saving Winslow by Sharon Creech

When his father brings home an ailing baby donkey, Louie is determined to save the newborn. "A winning tale of love"-Kirkus, starred review



March 2nd - Dr. Seuss' birthday! Hat Day

March 3rd - Sock Day

March 3rd will be PTO Movie Night

Where: Jefferson's Gym

Time: 6:30 pm to 8:00 PM

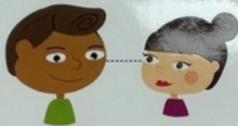
More information to come.





(Feb 2nd- Feb 13th)

Disagreeing Appropriately



1. Look at the person.



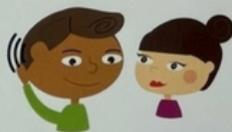
2. Use a pleasant voice.



3. Tell why you feel differently.



4. Give a reason.



5. Listen to the other person.

(Feb 16th- Feb 27th)

ACCEPTING "NO" FOR AN ANSWER

- . Look at the person.
- . Say "okay"
- . Stay calm.
- . If you disagree, ask later.



PROTECTING YOUR CHILD

Safeguarding Kids' Online Activities

Report to **PARENTS**

The Internet is an extraordinary resource for our children. It allows them to see what the Mars Rover is up to in real time or watch video footage of animals in the wild.

However, it can be a frightening place for parents, which is why families need to be involved. Here's how to start:

Learn the lingo. In a few short years, many children will grow up far more conversant with digital technology than their parents. Your digital capacity needs to grow alongside theirs if you expect to monitor their online activities.

Limit their access. Through your Internet service provider (ISP), set up parental controls on your child's screen name to prevent him or her from venturing into inappropriate sites. Log on to getnetwise.org/tools for help.

Look beyond the computer. Install parental controls on all their devices—phones, tablets, and TVs—and protect your own with passwords your kids don't know. By keeping the family computer in a public area, you can see what sites your younger child is viewing. But once kids get to be preteens, there's very little you can do to control their portable devices unless they're preprogrammed.

Cut out spam. Install a virtual filter on all devices to prevent unsolicited email and other potentially harmful materials from being delivered. If your email service doesn't already include a spam filter, there are plenty of software programs that can do the job.

Emphasize the NEVER. Make sure your kids understand NEVER to give out any personal information for any reason to anyone, no matter how innocent the request

may seem. Unless instructed otherwise, children are too often eager to post their names and addresses to get free gifts or gain access to "fun sites."

Patrol their social media. Starting in the preteen years, kids text and post on Facebook to communicate with their peers a lot. Kids think whatever they post is private and believe that it can only be accessed by their friends. Emphasize that whatever they post online is available for anyone to read; and that includes you, their parent.



Patrol your own social media. Don't let family pride leave you and your kids vulnerable. Too many people post so much information, photos, and details about their children that they're actually endangering them. Make sure your privacy settings are strictly in place.

Beware of lurking impostors. Sexual predators are skilled at enticing children into online relationships, usually with fake identities. Strongly stress to kids that they cannot trust anyone online whom they or you do not know personally. If an online stranger tries to strike up a regular correspondence, makes a Skype request, wants to telephone them, or seeks to meet in person, ask your kids to tell you immediately.

Learn more. Visit NetSmartz.org/parents for more information on cyber bullying, inappropriate content, and gaming.



Counselor's Corner with Mrs. Flemming



TEACHING KINDNESS THROUGH EVERYDAY MOMENTS

One of the most important lessons students learn at school goes beyond academics—it's how to treat one another. Kindness, empathy, and respect are the fundamentals of a safe, supportive learning environment where all students feel valued and included. These qualities are not just traits of good character, they're essential life skills that foster emotional intelligence, improve relationships, and contribute to a more inclusive society. Encouraging these values early in life lays the foundation for children to grow into caring, responsible adults.

Kindness is choosing to be friendly, helpful, and considerate, even when it's not required. A smile in the hallway, inviting someone to join a game, or offering help with schoolwork may seem small, but these actions can make a big difference in someone's day. Kindness has a ripple effect: when one student chooses kindness, others often follow.

Empathy is the ability to understand and care about how someone else is feeling. It means pausing to think, "How would I feel in their place?" Students come to school with different experiences, strengths, and challenges. Empathy helps children recognize that everyone has feelings—and that words and actions matter. When students practice empathy, conflicts decrease and friendships grow stronger.

Respect means treating others the way we want to be treated. This includes respecting differences, personal space, opinions, and boundaries. Respectful behavior looks like listening when others are speaking, using kind words, following school rules, and standing up for classmates. Respect creates trust, and trust helps students feel safe to learn and grow.

At school, students are encouraged to:

- **Think before they speak** – "Are my words helpful or hurtful?"
- **Include others** – Look for classmates who may feel left out.

- **Pause and problem-solve** – When conflicts arise, take a breath and talk it through.
- **Ask for help** – Trusted adults are here to support students they are experiencing strong emotions or are facing challenges that feel too big.

Families play an important role in reinforcing these values at home. Simple conversations about daily interactions, modeling respectful communication, and praising acts of kindness help children strengthen these skills. Empathy and compassion grow stronger with practice. Here are five ways to teach you child empathy and compassion:

- **Model Kindness Daily**- Children learn best by observing others. Show kindness in your words and actions. Whether at home or out in the community, your behavior sets an example for your child to follow.
- **Encourage Perspective-Taking**- Help children imagine how others feel. Simple questions like, *“How do you think your friend feels?”* Or *“What could you do differently next time?”* teaches them to consider different perspectives and builds self-awareness.
- **Introduce Books About Emotions**- Storybooks that explore emotions and relationships are excellent tools. Reading together allows children to discuss characters’ feelings, making empathy easier to understand.
- **Praise Acts of Kindness**- When your child helps someone, acknowledge it. Positive reinforcement encourages them to repeat such actions, whether they are at home or at school.
- **Teach Problem-Solving**- Guide children to resolve conflicts peacefully. Encourage them to use kind words and offer solutions, building their ability to handle emotions and situations effectively.

Creating a Kinder Future

Encouraging kindness and empathy is helping equip children to be thoughtful, courageous, and emotionally intelligent adults. When children grow up understanding the value of kindness and the power of empathy, they are better prepared to face challenges, build inclusive communities, and create meaningful change in the world.

By investing in these values today, we nurture a generation that doesn’t just coexist but truly cares.

PARENT RESOURCES



[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/
PROFILE.PHP?ID=61556781784403](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61556781784403)



[HTTPS://SDSFEC.ORG/](https://sdsfec.org/)



[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/
GROUPS/781453261913514](https://www.facebook.com/groups/781453261913514)



[PARENTGUIDANCE.ORG](https://parentguidance.org)



[HTTPS://WWW.PBS.ORG/
PARENTS](https://www.pbs.org/parents)



[HTTPS://
CODINGTONCONNECTS.COM/](https://codingtonconnects.com/)



[HTTPS://SAFE2SAY.SD.GOV](https://safe2say.sd.gov)

FEBRUARY 2026

MENU IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

FRUIT AND MILK IS OFFERED AT ALL BREAKFAST MEALS

VEGGIE BAR, FRUIT SELECTION AND MILK SELECTION ARE OFFERED AT ALL LUNCH MEALS.

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
BREAKFAST: ^{WEEK 2} 2 CARAMEL/CINI MINI 41G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS LUNCH: CHEESEBURGER 28G FRIES 13G	BREAKFAST: ³ MINI JOHN 13G GOGURT 8G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS LUNCH: TATCHOS 16G CHURRO 25G	BREAKFAST: ⁴ BREAKFAST PIZZA 27G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS LUNCH: POPCORN CHICKEN 14G MASHED POT. 20G GRAVY 4G DINNER ROLL 23G	BREAKFAST: ⁵ GRAPE/CHOC. CRESENT 38G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS LUNCH: SCALLOPED POTATOES & HAM 21G BISCUIT 24G	BREAKFAST: ⁶ STUFFED H.B. 24G YOGURT CUP 15G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS LUNCH: ITALIAN DUNKERS 34G/51G MARINARA CUP 7G CORN 17G
BREAKFAST: ⁹ ^{WEEK 4} MUFFINS 21G-31G STRING CHEESE <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS LUNCH: HOT DOG 21G SMILE FRIES 20G TOTS 16G	BREAKFAST: ¹⁰ BAGEL 31G OR BURRITO 29G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS LUNCH: ORANGE CHICKEN 26G FRIED RICE 27G FRUIT CUP 21G	BREAKFAST: ¹¹ PANCAKE STICK 17G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS LUNCH: BREADED CHICKEN SANDWICH 44G BAKED BEANS 30G	BREAKFAST: ¹² FRENCH TOAST 37G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS LUNCH: SLICED BEEF/GRAVY 4G MASHED POTATOES 20G DINNER ROLL 23G	NO SCHOOL ¹³ 
NO SCHOOL ¹⁶ ^{WEEK 5} 	BREAKFAST: ¹⁷ F. TOAST STICKS 38G SAUSAGE PATTY <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS LUNCH: CHICKEN OR CHEESE QUESIDILLA 33G H.B. COINS 21G	BREAKFAST: ¹⁸ APPLE FILLED DONUT 33G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS LUNCH: CHICKEN TENDERS 12G/18G MASHED POT. 20G GRAVY 4G DINNER ROLL 23G	BREAKFAST: ¹⁹ PANCAKE MINI 31G/MAX 36G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS LUNCH: PANCAKE 13G/26G OMELET FRUIT JUICE 15G	BREAKFAST: ²⁰ BREAD LOAF 34G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS LUNCH: FRENCH BREAD PIZZA 30G GREEN BEANS 4G
BREAKFAST: ²³ ^{WEEK 6} APPLE OR CHERRY FRUDEL 38G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS LUNCH: SLOPPY JOES 29G BAKED BEANS 30G	BREAKFAST: ²⁴ FUNNEL CAKE 38G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS LUNCH: CRISPIITOS 23G/46G FRUIT CUP 21G	BREAKFAST: ²⁵ BKFST SANDWICH (B)24G/(C)34G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS LUNCH: CHICKEN NUGGETS K-4 DRUMSTICKS 6G 5-12 WEDGES 20G BISCUITS 24G	BREAKFAST: ²⁶ MINI BAGELS 42G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS LUNCH: F.T. STICKS 38G H.B. PATTY 15G SAUSAGE PATTY	BREAKFAST: ²⁷ OATMEAL ROUND 39G <u>M.S/H.S.</u> VARIETY ITEMS LUNCH: LASGANA ROLLUP 22G MIXED VEGGIES 12G PLAIN BREADSTICK 14G