Mitchell Public Schools

The mission of Mitchell Public Schools is to inspire and educate all students for a lifetime of success.

December 2025

Mitchell Elementary and Junior/Senior High Schools are accredited by the State of Nebraska and also hold Cognia Regional Accreditation

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Menus are available for viewing and printing on MPS website www.mitchelltigers.org.
Choose dining and your child's school for My School Menus breakfast and lunch menu choices each day.

News from the Cafeteria

Elementary student meal prices are $2.50 for breakfast and $3.25 for lunch Jr/Sr High student meal prices are $2.75 and $3.50 for lunch. Adult meal prices are $3.75 for breakfast and $5.00 for lunch.

A la carte, seconds, and extra milk are available at a cost to **ALL** students regardless of meal status. Please discuss with your child/children whether or not they are allowed to purchase extra items at a cost to each family account. If you prefer your account be blocked from extra purchases, please contact the school.

We encourage all households to continue to complete application forms for free or reduced priced meals for the school year. This is important to our school district as the information obtained from meal applications is used to determine student eligibility for a number of school programs.

Questions can be asked to Chris Sisson in the elementary office at 308-623-2828

MPS Staff and Students Recite the Pledge of Allegiance Each Morning at the Beginning of School



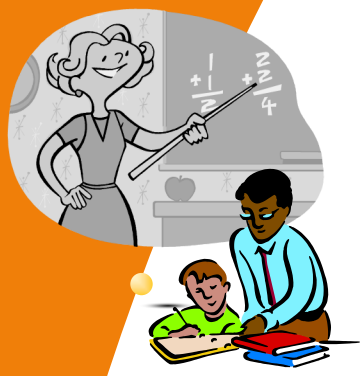
G–GRATITUDE

R–RESPECT

R–RESPONSIBILITY

R–RESILIENCE





MPS — Staff

Administration

Katherine Urbanek — Superintendent
Heath Peters — JH/HS Principal
Kaci Kearns — Elementary Principal
Jamie Batterman- Special Serv Director
Michelle Peters - Curr/Assess Director
Paul Newland — AD/Dean of Students
Glen Eberspecher — Tech Coordinator
John Bevins - Bus/Custodial Supervisor
Loren Braman — JH/HS Counselor
Kortni Zeiler — Elem Counselor

Administrative Assistants

Kristi Weiss— District Bookkeeper
Rama Debus — JH/HS Secretary
Ashley Robbins — JH/HS Secretary
Mindy Fillingham — Elementary Secretary
Chris Sisson — Elementary Secretary

JH/HS Staff

"60% of Mitchell Public School's Staff hold a Master's Degree"

Robert Shoopman — Science
Vicki Clark — Science
Jeremy Powell — Science
Keeya Zeiler — Social Studies
Anthony Chancellor — Social Studies
Matt Baker— Social Studies
Matt Chrisman — Math
Colby Folck — Math
Mike Harriger — Math
Michelle Peters — Math
Jordan Gonzales — English
Karin Law — English
Kaiya West — English
Sarah Avila — Reading
Renee Malm — Special Education
Steven Law — Art
Walker Dobry— Industrial Arts
Nick Kuxhausen — Physical Education
Brooke Turek— Physical Education
Maria Gillen — Business
Tanner Long — Business
Cassandra Wiegel —Family/Cons Science
Nikki Bunnell — Vocal Music
Austin Sailors — Instrumental Music
Paige Herrera — Spanish
Allison Villagrana— Library
Kim Thomas — Nurse
Chelsey Zimmerman — Para-educator
Michelle Bremer — Para-educator
Laura Button — Para-educator
Kobie Bradley — Para-educator
Dan Klingsporn —Custodian/Bus Driver
Tom Hernandez — Custodian/Bus Driver
Rick Rein — Bus Driver

Elementary Staff

"The average number of years of teaching experience for MPS teachers is 15 years."

Julia Jacobs — Preschool
Casie Campbell — Preschool
Cortney Bellairs — Kindergarten
Katie Scott — Kindergarten
Kylie Soule — Kindergarten
Kammie Wilson — Kindergarten
Shawn Helgerson — 1st Grade
Miranda King— 1st Grade
Becky Osmera— 1st Grade
Kaitlin Broussard — 2nd Grade
Tina Cheek — 2nd Grade
Amie Hessler — 2nd Grade
Erin Reisig — 3rd Grade
Michelle Engstrom — 3rd Grade
Lyndsey Walters — 3rd Grade
Kelli Clarke — 4th Grade
Taylor Briggs — 4th Grade
Andrea Feltgen — 4th Grade
Emily Walton — 5th Grade
Jami Schaffer — 5th Grade
Grace Wyatt — 6th Grade
David Becker — 6th Grade
Jenny Bohl —6th Grade
Kristin Pankonin — Special Education
Alyxis Littau — Special Education
Ashley Dobry — Title I
Dillon Broussard — Physical Education
Nikki Bunnell — Vocal Music
Austin Sailors — Vocal Music/Instr. Music
Kim Thomas — Nurse
Allison Villagrana — Library
Miranda Nichols — PS Para-educator
Patty Fetters — PS Para-educator
Faith Missel — PS Para-educator
Samuel Costello — Para-educator
Mariah Bourlier — Para-educator
Brandi Cardona — Para-educator
Marissa Peterson — Para-educator
Rebecca Parker— Para-educator
Laura Hubbard — Para-educator
Christine Johnson — Para-educator
Jeanie Keane — Para-educator
Afton Mitchell — Para-educator
Brenda Morales-Macias — Para-educator
Shawn Francescato — Para-educator
Winter Keener — Para-educator
Karon Hawley — Para-educator
Katherine McCormick — Para-educator
Karen Whiting — Para-educator
Vanessa Hernandez — Para-educator
Jackson Mitchell — Para-educator
Rudy Hernandez — Custodian/Bus Driver
Bryan Hazzard — Custodian/Bus Driver
Ethan Bellairs — Custodian
Jennifer Krahulik — After-school Program Dir.
Cindy Garcia— Foster Grandmother
Bonnie Hutchinson— Foster Grandmother
Fran Carabajal— Foster Grandmother
Brooke Smith— Bus Driver



Mitchell Public Schools current goals for School Improvement are…

All students will improve Reading skills.

And

All staff and students will demonstrate respect, responsibility, and work ethic.

We host accreditation reviews of our goals every five years.

All staff are included in School Improvement meetings and activities.

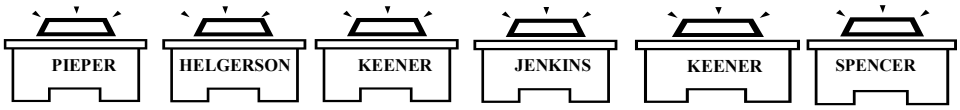
BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mitchell Public Schools is governed by a six-member Board of Education elected by patrons of the district to serve four-year terms.

The current Board of Education is:

Jeff Jenkins...President
Brad Helgerson...Vice President
Doug Keener...Secretary
Paul Pieper...Board Member
Mark Spencer...Board Member
Dustan Keener...Board Member
Alex Galloway...Student Representative

We Do What's Best for Kids!



Annual Report to the District

Nebraska Department of Education, Rule 10 requires that each school district prepare and distribute annually a report to the people of the district. The material included has been compiled and distributed to establish a two-way communication between the Mitchell School System and the people it serves. The Mitchell School District is legally described as School District 31 Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska. Mitchell is a Class III school organized as Pre-School, K-6 Elementary, and a 7-12 secondary school, serving students in portions of Scotts Bluff and Sioux counties.

The October Student enrollment count for the Department of Education was 649 students, PK-12. The district covers approximately 154 square miles. The current valuation of the district is $427,320,886. The official estimated total property tax levy for 2025-26 is $0.799694 with a general fund levy of $0.714865, and a building fund of $0.073829.

Total District Enrollment (as of 11/25/25)

Pre-School	45	7	51
K	55	8	37
1	41	9	45
2	50	10	42
3	47	11	40
4	59	12	48
5	37		
6	52		

To view our Nebraska Education Profile / Compare us to other Districts…
Log on to the following site… www.nep.education.ne.gov/

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Nebraska Education Profile is based on information gathered from students during the 2024-2025 school year.

Nebraska Education Profile

Student Characteristics	State Average	District Average
Going to College	76.00%	75.00%
High Ability	13.13%	5.28%
Learning the English Language	10.34%	*
Receiving Special Education Services	17.07%	10.89%
Moving in or out during School Year	7.73%	7.43%

Attendance Rate	State	District
2015-2016	94.89	94.60
2016-2017	94.59	95.01
2017-2018	94.30	95.12
2018-2019	94.48	94.65
2019-2020	94.30	93.69
2020-2021	93.21	93.92
2021-2022	92.28	93.47
2022-2023	92.50	94.49
2023-2024	92.59	94.18
2024-2025	92.80	94.87
High School Teachers Endorsed in Subject area they Teach	94.00%	97.00%

PK-12 Enrollment by Years

2015-2016.....683
2016-2017.....653
2017-2018.....674
2018-2019.....715
2019-2020.....711
2020-2021.....637
2021-2022.....633
2022-2023.....623
2023-2024.....603
2024-2025.....654
2025-2026.....649

Students Eligible for Free/ Reduced Priced Meals	State Average	District Average
2015-2016	44.12	42.17
2016-2017	44.65	42.88
2017-2018	45.83	44.66
2018-2019	45.21	45.59
2019-2020	45.60	45.29
2020-2021	46.33	47.57
2021-2022	41.31	40.44
2022-2023	49.69	49.68
2023-2024	51.80	48.34
2025-2026	50.43	43.21

To View the Nebraska Educational Profile

Go to the Following Web Address...

http://www.nep.education.ne.gov/

HS Graduation Rate	State	District
2015	88.89	94.83
2016	89.27	95.24
2017	89.11	95.45
2018	89.03	92.31
2019	88.42	91.79
2020	87.51	91.49
2021	87.56	93.00
2022	86.85	93.18
2023	87.25	97.56
2024	88.18	91.43
2025	87.90	97.92

Receipts

	Receipts	Percents
Local	$2,661,033.00	29.00%
County	$ 32,594.00	0.36%
State	$5,815,800.00	63.51%
Federal	$ 618,414.00	6.75%
Other	$ 29,218.00	0.38%
Total	$9,157,059.00	100.00%

Expenditures

	Expenditures	Percents
All Instruction	$6,998,332.00	67.65%
Federal	$ 380,260.00	3.68%
General Administration	$ 383,721.00	3.71%
Maintenance & Operation	$ 727,768.00	7.03%
Office of the Principal	$ 584,961.00	5.65%
Other	$ 159,960.00	1.55%
Central Services	$ 111,465.00	1.08%
Support Services - Pupils	$ 443,396.00	4.29%
Support Serv. - Pupils Trans.	$ 203,535.00	1.97%
Support Services - Instruction	$ 351,732.00	3.39%
Total Expenditures	$10,345,130.00	100.00%

Opportunities at Mitchell Public Schools

In recent years, one word in the world of education has been used often:

op·por·tu·ni·ty: ***a set of circumstances that makes it possible to do something.***

What opportunities does Mitchell offer? Why should parents choose Mitchell Public Schools as the place to entrust with their children's education and future? My answer is simple: Mitchell provides opportunities unmatched by any other district.



Dr. Katherine Urbanek
Superintendent of Schools

Within the last five years, we have been able to add a **full day preschool program** in combination with our traditional half-day program. In addition to the preschool program, we offer **Kinder Connection** for those 5-year olds not quite ready to begin kindergarten but have aged out of preschool. This program follows the regular school day schedule and exposes students to kindergarten, but is rooted in a concentrated effort on play-based learning and social/emotional skill development. Both of these programs allow parents to have safe, economical options to give their young children the strong start needed for lifelong learning.

Our **elementary school is a popular option** for students throughout the Sugar Valley. Highly trained, compassionate, talented teachers provide excellent education with low teacher to student ratios. Days are filled with reading, writing and math, but are also filled with learning to play and interact well together. In 2021, the **Tiger Club After School Program** was added to provide a safe and enriching experience for students that would more than likely go to an empty house after school. This provides working parents a piece of mind knowing they can provide for their family as well as know their children are safe and engaged in exciting activities. In addition to the Tiger Club, exposure to sports through afterschool and evening programs gives our young athletes the opportunity to explore football, volleyball, basketball, and wrestling.

Opportunities in our junior high and high school have exploded in recent years. Academically, Mitchell offers **seven (7) complete Career Clusters** in the content areas of Agriculture, Industrial Technology, Business, Health, Technology and Family Consumer Sciences. Mitchell students have a personalized learning program allowing each student to select courses based on their own interests. Knowing that the young mind isn't ready to make life-long decisions, our programming allows students to choose interests as they ebb and flow. Students are not "locked into" any one career field but can also learn to their desire in many subjects. **Students are individuals** and feel connected to their school community and their own learning. Beginning in junior high, students are exposed to exploring potential futures, setting goals in their learning, and being actively involved. Seniors continue to take advantage of the Senior Plan, allowing for dual-credit courses, work opportunities, and traditional extracurricular activities.

As a culminating experience, upper classmen have many opportunities:

Job Shadowing: Students complete 20 or more hours in a specific career placement. This gives emerging young adults the opportunity to test out a career and self-reflect on the experience. This has proven to confirm a career path or, on some occasions, solidify that career is not what they want to do!

Volunteer Hours: Students complete 20 hours of volunteer service, developing a sense of community and commitment to others. This is a simple and yet often overlooked skill that we value in a connected community.

Career Leadership and College and Career Ready Courses: These two courses are required for all seniors. Seniors not only explore and narrow their interests for the next step of college or career, but they also learn to be successful young adults. Students are taught budgeting, completing income taxes, solidifying morals and beliefs, learning and practicing skills employers are looking for, and basic living skills. This class works in conjunction with parents as students leave for their own adulthood.

What is the greatest **OPPORUNITY** Mitchell has to offer? My answer to this is: EVER-THING. Mitchell Public Schools allows every individual student **the ability to do it all.** Students are encouraged to be involved in as many activities in and out of school as possible. Ranging from the traditional sports to fine arts to new offerings such as Esports. Mitchell students are contributing to the community and are involved. Students are specifically taught the personal skills necessary for successful employment while also participating in many different activities, just as we hope all future community members will do. **Mitchell students are given a set of skills to make it possible to do everything.** This allows young people to enter the world with a DIVERSE skill set. They can change their minds–minds which aren't yet developed to make life-long decisions–while having a vast skill set with a variety of tools to be successful in whatever they choose to do.

Dr. Katherine Urbanek, Superintendent

NWEA MAPS Testing
(Jr/Sr High)
April 27-30

(Elementary)
April 28-30

Nebraska State Testing
(NSCAS-Elem.)
April 14-17

(NSCAS-HS)
April 14-17

ACT TEST
will be Administered to ALL Juniors

Tuesday, March 31st
8:00 am—1:30 pm

ACT



Mr. Peters
JH/HS Principal

MPS – From Mr. Peters – JH/HS Principal

PARENTS-PLEASE COMMUNICATE ATTENDANCE WITH THE SCHOOL

The Principal's office would like to remind/inform parents to call the office secretary (623-2235), in the event that their child is ill. This call should occur the morning of the absence by 9:00 A.M. If the school is not contacted within 24 hours, the absence becomes unexcused. Any absence that is not verified by a parent may be viewed as a truancy issue.



How to Increase Confidence

As we send our children off to school and eventually out into the real world, we are optimistic about the impact of their school experience. We often think about their learning, their participation in activities and their relationships with friends, classmates and teachers and how these experiences will assist them in their future. Often, we as parents overlook our role to assist our children in developing their self confidence which is vital when considering the major transitions that our children will encounter. Feeling confident can pave the way for a student's future success, both in and out of the classroom and in their careers and relationships.
Here are some ways that we can assist our children with their self confidence.

Limit access to gaming, social media and online activity.

Unfortunately, the opportunity for our youth to over-indulge in gaming and social media which has a direct correlation of lack of adequate sleep/rest. Lack of sleep/rest can be linked to performance which has a direct correlation to self confidence.
Instead, spend some time talking. Fifteen minutes may not seem like much, but research shows spending that amount of time each day talking with your teen can keep your lines of communication open. Chat with your teen when you are both relaxed and in a good mood. Watch for cues that your teen wants to talk. Doing an activity together lends to great discussion opportunities.

Stay upbeat.

Encourage your teen with positive statements like "I know you'll rock your presentation today!" Also, share what gives you confidence. "I was a little nervous about my presentation at work, but I felt good because I had backed up my points with solid information."

Give him/her responsibility.

Put your teenager in charge of home projects like replacing a water filter or a printer cartridge. Accomplishing tasks successfully, and seeing family members benefit from their efforts, will boost his/her confidence.

Focus on what your teen *can do.*

Shine the spotlight on what your child is good at. Say he/she has a knack for explaining complicated ideas in simple language. Ask him/her to help his/her younger brother/sister with fractions homework or to teach the whole family how to play a challenging board game.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

This school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, gender, marital status, disability, or age in admission or access to, or treatment of employment, in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Any person who believes she or he has been discriminated against, denied a benefit, or excluded from participation in any district education or employment program or activity may file a grievance using the district's grievance procedures.

Any person having inquiries concerning this school district's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, or Section 504 is directed to contact Superintendent Dr. Katherine Urbanek in writing at 1819 19th Ave., Mitchell, NE 69357 or by telephone at (308)623-1707. For further assistance, you may also contact Office for Civil Rights (Kansas City Office), FAX: 816-268-0599; Email: OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov.



ACT

Mitchell Public Schools has adopted the John Baylor ACT Test Prep curriculum. This program has proven to raise ACT test scores among high school students across Nebraska. At MPS students will be involved in this program this Spring prior to ACT test opportunities.



Mrs. Kearns
Elementary Principal

Elementary Principal News





What a privilege it is to address our Mitchell Public School Families as the new Elementary Principal. It is an honor to work alongside our students, teachers, families, and community members. I look forward to learning more about our Mitchell Families!

My experience in education includes teaching Kindergarten, 1st grade and 4th grade for 21 years at Mitchell Elementary. I was also the Activities Director and Dean of Students for the past 3 years at Mitchell Public Schools. I am starting my 26th year in education and I am also the MHS Girls Golf Coach.

I want to thank everyone for their continued support. Our students did an amazing job raising money with our Butter Braid Sales and Sponsorship Drive. I also want to send a special "Thank you" to our Mitchell PET for funding our first UP DAY! Elementary students were able to earn the opportunity to go bowling, thanks to the PET's contributions.

The PET also sponsored the amazing Diamonds and Denim Gala this Fall. It was TERRIFIC!

I would like to ask elementary parents to consider joining the Elementary PET and help to continue supporting our students and Mitchell Elementary.

Go Tigers!





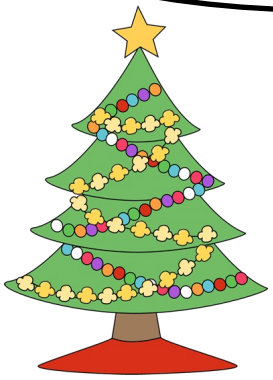




Stay in Touch:
Download: MPS app
Rooms: Communicate with Classroom Teachers
Website: mitchelltigers.org

Calendar Info:

December:
Tuesday, December 16th -
Elementary Christmas Programs:
4-6th grades @ 1-1:50
K-3rd grades @ 2:15-3:00
Friday, December 19th—Monday, January 5th
Christmas Break



Together We Transform Lives
TEAMMATES MENTORING

We also participate in the Teammates Mentoring Program. Teammates partner with school districts and communities to provide the support and encouragement of mentors to students. Their goal is for mentees to develop safe, positive relationships with their mentors and for those matches to last through high school graduation. Teammates is always looking for more mentors. Many of our mentors have expressed how the program benefits their lives as well as their mentees. The Teammates Program would like mentors and mentees to meet once a week, at the school, possibly over lunch. The Teammates Mentoring Program makes a positive impact on everyone involved. If you are interested in becoming a mentor please go to TeamMates.org or stop by Mrs. Zeiler or Mrs. Kearns office to discuss the Teammates Mentoring Program further.



The strongest factor for success is CONFIDENCE:
Believing you can do it, Believing you deserve it, Believing you will get it.

Mrs. Peters
Assessment/Curriculum Director

At Mitchell Public Schools, our mission is simple: to inspire and educate all students for a lifetime of success. Every decision we make, every lesson we design, and every relationship we build supports this purpose. As we look ahead to the rest of the school year of learning, we want to share some of the key goals and values guiding our work with your children.

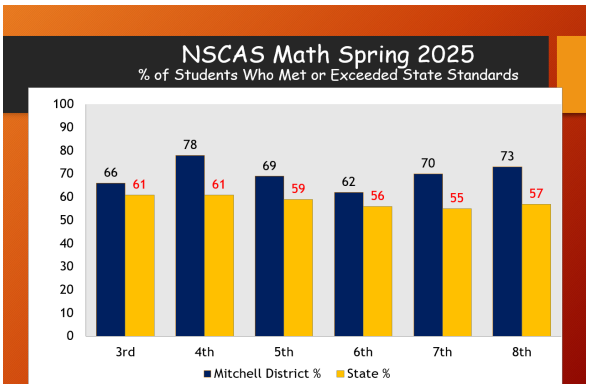
Focusing on Strong Foundations: Reading Comprehension & Critical Thinking
This year, we are placing a special emphasis on strengthening reading comprehension and critical thinking skills across all grade levels. These skills are the foundation for success in every subject area and are essential for preparing students for an ever-changing world. Our teachers are committed to giving students the tools they need to understand, analyze, and respond thoughtfully to what they read—skills that will serve them well long after they leave our classrooms.

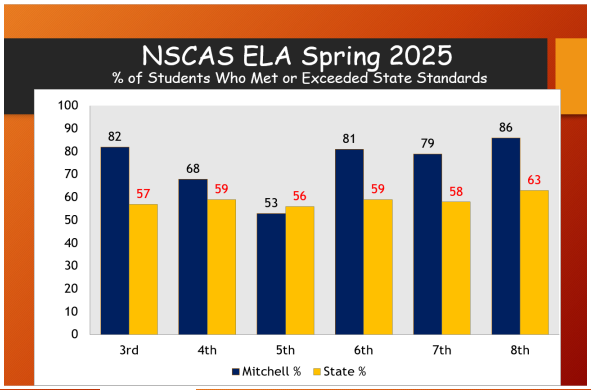
Growing Skills That Build Character
We are also dedicated to helping students grow socially and emotionally. Our focus on respect, responsibility, and work ethic supports the development of strong character and healthy relationships. These traits help create a positive school culture while also preparing students to become responsible, engaged members of the community.

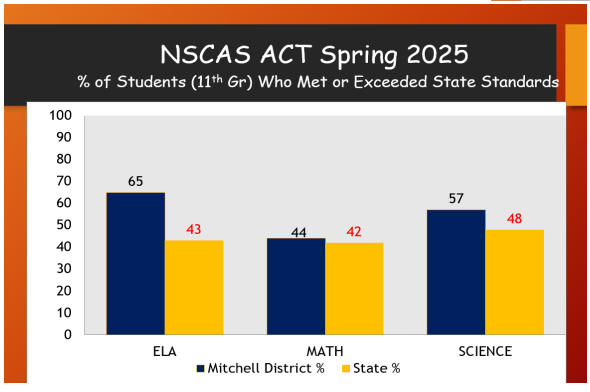
Belief in Every Student
Our teachers believe deeply in the potential of every child. We celebrate students' efforts, perseverance, and hard work, knowing that growth comes from trying, reflecting, and trying again. When students know they are believed in, they learn to believe in themselves—and that confidence is a powerful factor for lifelong success.

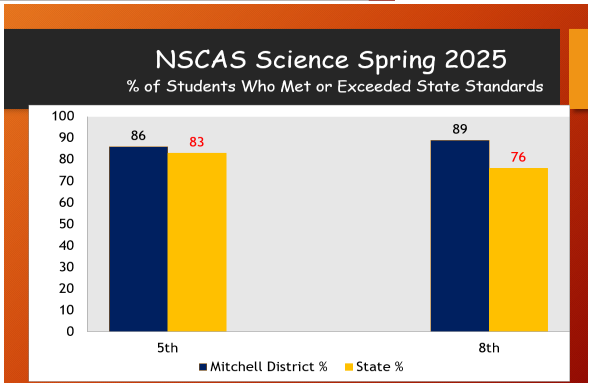
A Commitment That Extends Beyond the School Walls
One of the greatest strengths of Mitchell Public Schools is the dedication of our staff. The adults in our school community invest in students not just for the time they are with us, but long after they move on to new chapters. We care about who they are now and who they will become in the future. That care shapes everything from classroom instruction to extracurricular activities to the relationships we build each day.

To our parents, guardians, and community members: thank you for your partnership and support. Together, we will continue to create a school environment where every student feels inspired, valued, and prepared for success—today and for a lifetime to come.









Special Services

Jamie Batterman - Special Services Director



SPECIAL EDUCATION

We are off to a great start to the 2025-26 school year! I am proud to serve our students in our great school community where we work hard to build relationships and aim to maintain a welcoming, supportive school environment for all students. Our strong values and commitment to a positive school climate are essential to student learning and overall student well-being. This year, we are focused on improving literacy outcomes for all students, recognizing the importance of literacy skills and their relationship to academic achievement.

I work alongside a hard-working team of educators that strive to build confidence, resiliency and a strong sense of belonging for every student. Student success is at the heart of everything we do. Our Special Education department includes;

Mrs. Renee Malm, High School Special Education teacher

Mrs. Alyxis Littau, Elementary Special Education teacher, grades K-3

Mrs. Kristin Pankonin, Elementary Special Education teacher, grades 4-6

Our Special Education staff strives to provide high quality, specially-designed instruction for students with disabilities and we aim to collaborate with our general education teachers and service providers to enhance access to the general education curriculum and create inclusive learning environments for all students receiving special education and related services.

I welcome parent collaboration and communication to support student needs Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions you may have in regards to our Special Education services.

I can be reached at 623-2828, and my email is jamie.batterman@mitchelltigers.org

CHILD FIND

At Mitchell Public Schools, we are dedicated to the principles of Child Find, a legal requirement aimed at ensuring all children with disabilities receive the support they need to succeed. Under the Child Find mandate, we actively seek to locate, identify, and evaluate children from birth through age 21 who may have developmental or educational needs that require special services. This process is in place for all children, regardless of the nature of the disability, and includes individuals with developmental delays, hearing and vision impairments, emotional disturbances, health impairments, specific learning disabilities, speech and language impairments, intellectual disabilities, orthopedic impairments, Autism, multiple disabilities, or traumatic brain injuries.

Our commitment means that any child within our district's boundaries—including those who are homeschooled, attend private school, or are not yet enrolled in school—may be eligible for an evaluation and supportive services, all at no cost to families. If a child is found eligible under federal and state guidelines, the district will work with families to create an individualized plan tailored to their unique needs.

INFORMATION REGARDING SECTION 504

Section 504 is a federal law that ensures equal access to educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities in any federally funded program. Under Section 504, an individual with a disability is defined as anyone who:

- Has a mental or physical impairment that significantly impacts one or more major life activities (such as self-care, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, or working),
- Has a history of such an impairment, or
- Is perceived as having such an impairment.

Our school district is dedicated to fostering an inclusive environment where every student, family member, and staff member is valued and supported. In line with Section 504, we are committed to ensuring that all district policies and practices are inclusive and non-discriminatory. We strive to make all of our programs and practices accessible and accommodating for those with disabilities.

As part of our commitment to all students, if a student is found eligible based on the criteria of Section 504, we will collaborate and strive to provide access to appropriate educational programming tailored to their unique needs.

If parents or guardians have any questions about the eligibility determination made by the school district, they have the right to request a hearing with an impartial hearing officer. We are here to partner with families in creating a welcoming, supportive educational experience for all.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects the privacy of student educational records and grants specific rights to parents, guardians, and eligible students. Under FERPA, they have the right to: 1) inspect and review their child's educational records; 2) receive a list of all individuals who have access to those records; 3) request clarification of any item in the records; 4) request changes to any information that is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the child's rights; and 5) request a hearing if the school declines to make the requested amendment.

WE LOVE OUR PARAEDUCATORS

Our paraeducators play an important role in supporting our students every day. They work closely with teachers to offer individual support and create a positive environment where our students can thrive. Their compassion, dedication and unique skill sets make meaningful differences daily, helping to ensure our students feel supported and valued. We are incredibly grateful to have a kind, caring and compassionate paraprofessional staff, and greatly appreciate the invaluable impact they have on student success. Thank you, paraeducators, for your hard work and commitment to our students!

Are you concerned about an infant or toddler's growth and development?

If so, please reach out to learn if the child may be eligible for Early Development Network (EDN) services. Children from birth to age three may qualify for special services if they show signs of developmental delays or have a diagnosed health condition affecting their development. For more information, please contact Nicole Bolek, ESU 13 EDN Service Coordinator, 308-635-3427, or nbolek@esu13.org.

Early Development Network

Babies Can't Wait

Individuals with questions regarding any programming within
Special Services are encouraged to reach out to
Ms. Jamie Batterman, Special Services Director at 623-2828 or jamie.batterman@mitchelltigers.org



Mr. Braman — HS Counselor
308 623-2235
email-lbraman@mitchelltigers.org

Be Prepared!!!

Admission Standards to UNL, UNK, UNO

- Math 4 years (Algebra I, II, Geometry, and one additional class that builds on Geometry or Algebra background)
- English 4 years
- Social Studies 4 years (including, Geography, World History, American History, and American Government)
- Natural Sciences 3 years (One class must include a lab)
- Foreign Language 2 years (Second unit must build off of first)

2025-2026 ACT Test Dates
www.actstudent.org

SCHOOL CODE: 281-530

Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Fee Required
December 13, 2025	November 7, 2025	November 24, 2025
February 14, 2026	January 7, 2026	January 21, 2026
April 11, 2026	March 6, 2026	March 24, 2026
June 13, 2026	May 8, 2026	May 27, 2026
July 11, 2026	June 5, 2026	June 24, 2026

2025-2026 Time Table for Seniors

November

Continue looking at on-campus visits. This should be completed by the end of April.
Check your Emails and the Mitchell Website/App for scholarship listings
All Job Shadow/Internships documents are due on December 19, 2026

December

RHOP application deadline for Chadron State College is December 1st
2026 College Freshmen Scholarship application to UNL, UNO, UNK, is due January 15 (Complete application and activities resume must be received by this date).
FAFSA Registration, Seniors—December 4, 2025 (This date used to be in October)
Check to make sure graduation requirements are in order.
Make second semester schedule changes if necessary.
Take ACT (December 18, 2025).

January

Check colleges of your choice for application deadlines, scholarship deadlines, and financial aid deadlines.
Conduct second semester senior interview with Mr. Braman.
Deadline for February 14, 2025 ACT is January 7, 2026.
Scholarship Deadline at Uni. of Nebraska –Jan 15. (All students that have filed an application will be considered for the Regents, Nebraska's Top Scholar, David Distinguished Scholars Award and the James Canfield Award).
Check your Emails and the Mitchell Website/App for scholarship listings

February

Applications for admission should be complete.
Financial aid applications are due at most universities.
If you apply for freshmen scholarships at UNL, UNK, or UNO, you must apply for admission by Feb. 1, and the financial aid form is due at UNL on March 1.
ACT Test- February 14, 2026.
Deadline for February ACT-January 7, 2026.
Local Scholarships applications begin - Check your Emails and the Mitchell Website/App for scholarship listings.

March

Deadline for University Honors program (Spring Application) (Uni. of Nebraska).
Check your Emails and the Mitchell Website/App for scholarship listings.
Complete Scholarship applications.
Deadline for April 11, 2026 ACT is March 6, 2026.

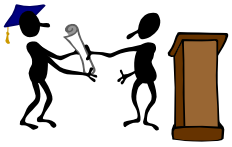
April

Most local scholarships are due this month.
Most colleges will notify you this month if you have been awarded a scholarship.
ACT Test- April 11, 2025.
Return any supplementary materials requested by colleges, i.e. housing contracts, medical forms, deposits, roommate preference.
Check your Emails and the Mitchell Website/App for scholarship listings
New student enrollment information on college web site for paid enrollment deposits (University of Neb.).

May

Maintain your grades and appropriate behavior!
Your acceptance to a college and the awarding of scholarships is provisional based on completing high school at your present grade point average, maintaining appropriate behavior, and graduating in good standing.
Schedule freshman orientation visit.
GRADUATION!!!! MAY 16, 2026 @ 2:00.

HAPPY GRADUATION !
MAY 16, 2026



Parents, Guardians, Students, and Community Members,

As we move through the school year, we want to take a moment to emphasize the importance of maintaining strong mental health. Academic success and personal growth both begin with feeling safe, supported, and balanced — and it takes all of us working together to make that possible.

For Students:

Your mental health matters just as much as your grades and activities. Here are a few ways to take care of yourself each day:

- Talk about your feelings. It's okay to not be okay sometimes. Reach out to a trusted adult, friend, or counselor when you need support.
- Stay connected. Spend time with people who make you feel valued and respected. Positive relationships help build resilience.
- Take breaks. Balance schoolwork, screen time, and rest. Make time for things you enjoy—reading, art, sports, music, or simply being outdoors.
- Be kind to yourself. Everyone makes mistakes and faces challenges. Practice self-compassion and focus on progress, not perfection.

For Parents and Guardians:

You play a vital role in nurturing your child's emotional well-being. Some helpful reminders include:

- Keep communication open. Ask about your child's day and listen without judgment. Small conversations can make a big difference.
- Model healthy coping skills. Share how you manage stress in positive ways, such as through exercise, hobbies, or taking quiet moments for yourself.
- Watch for changes. Notice shifts in mood, sleep, appetite, or social habits. If you're concerned, reach out to a counselor, teacher, or healthcare professional.
- Encourage balance. Help your child find a healthy routine that includes rest, family time, and fun.

Mental health is a shared journey, and our school community is here to help every step of the way. If you or your child ever need additional resources or someone to talk to, please don't hesitate to contact our District school counselors.

Together, we can continue to build a supportive, caring environment where every student can thrive—academically, socially, and emotionally.

62% of Mitchell Jr-Sr High School students participated in our 2025-2026 Fall Mental Health Assessment. There was a 9% increase in participation from last year's Spring 2024-2025 Mental Health Assessment. This participation has allowed more of our students to be educated on Mental Health resources, both in our school and in our community.

"Cultivating Awareness for a Healthier Learning Community."



Mr. Paul Newland
Activities Director/Dean of Students

WE ARE MITCHELL!

Follow the TIGERS!

Striv.tv OR MPS Facebook Page

ESPORTS

MPS Activities

Students at Mitchell Public Schools have a variety of activities to participate in with an amazing group of coaches and sponsors to lead the way. As we transition from the Fall into the Winter season, students will continue to gain life-long skills that will benefit them throughout their lifetime. Opportunities to collaborate, lead, persevere, and thrive in competitive environments will empower our students and athletes.

The following activities provide a bond with our community in avenues that allow our best to become even better: Football, Volleyball, Cross Country, Golf, Basketball, Wrestling, Track and Field, Cheer, Speech, Quiz Bowl, E-sports, Musical, One-Act, FBLA, NHS, FFA, Tigers Committed, Show Choir, Band (pep & jazz).

Our coaches and sponsors take pride in our district. The amount of additional hours spent preparing, teaching, guiding, motivating, and supporting our students is greatly appreciated. Throughout each school year, our activities provide avenues for our students to experience and learn life long lessons that will prepare and assist them in their future endeavors. The district strongly encourages our students to become involved in at least one extracurricular activity. We will always be willing to help guide and recommend activities for students who are looking to become involved at MPS!





School Nurse News – Mrs. Thomas

Is My Child Really Sick?
Guidelines for Keeping Children Home From School and Activities

The 2025-2026 school year is in full swing and we are starting to see common childhood illnesses in the classroom. There are several standards that hold true over time and I hope these guidelines will assist you in making good decisions on when to keep your child home from school and activities.

You do not want to keep a child home if he/she really is not sick, but you also do NOT want to send a sick child to school or activities. The following guidelines provided by Panhandle Public Health District as well as Central District Health Department and based on the most current research will make that decision easier for parents.

Students should be kept home from school if they exhibit any of the following symptoms: fever of 100.0 or greater (measured or subjective), chills, cold/shivering, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, new cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, loss of taste or smell.

If your child's eye is stuck shut, bright red, and/or oozing yellow or green discharge, keep home. These symptoms indicate the highly contagious bacterial form of pinkeye (conjunctivitis). Your child should see a doctor and return to school per doctor's advice.

A rash may be the first sign of one of childhood's many illnesses, such as measles, impetigo or chickenpox. DO NOT send a child with a rash to school until your doctor has said that it is safe to do so.

If your child complains of an earache, you should keep your child home and consult your doctor without delay and return to school per doctor's advice.

If your child exhibits signs of live head lice or nits please keep your child home until treated with an approved lice treatment. Your child may return to school once they are free of live lice and nits have been removed from hair.

Have a great 2025-2026 school year and feel free to call me if you have questions or concerns about your child's symptoms or illness . We are off to a great start, and I hope we can keep our students and school healthy!

Helping Students Achieve Optimum Health So They Can Grow, Develop, and Learn!

7—12 Health / Physical Ed / Strength & Conditioning/ HS Football
Mr. Kuxhausen



The first semester of the 2025-2026 school year is off to a great start in the Careers and Strength & Conditioning Department.

My classes currently consist of Career Leadership and Strength & Conditioning. The students have been working really hard in all of my classes. The students in weight training have been doing a great job improving their strength, conditioning, and agility. The work they are putting in will pay off for each one of them. The first semester has had a very positive start in the physical education department and I look forward to working with our students the rest of the year.

Our Career Leadership course focuses on getting our students ready for the next steps in their lives. We have spent the first part of the year working on career path research, college research, interviewing skills, and many other soft skills that are applicable for the workplace.



Our football team had a great season this past Fall going 4-5 record and just missed the Nebraska State Playoffs. We appreciate the hard work and dedication our seniors brought to our program over the past 4 years. We are also excited about the youth of our team and the amount of returners we will have for next year. We will continue to develop and work hard over the off season and get ourselves ready for next football season!



7—12 Health / Physical Ed / Strength & Conditioning
Miss Turek

The Physical Education/Health classes are off to a great start for the 2025-2026 school year! My classes consist of 9th grade PE/Health, Lifetime Activities, Weight Training, Jr. High Health Topics, and Jr. High PE. The students have shown tremendous effort and enthusiasm across all areas

In 9th Grade PE/Health, the students have been working hard in the weight room workouts and are already seeing progress. The students began the quarter with testing and have shown noticeable improvements in both strength and speed. Students have also completed the fall fitnessgram test which includes the 1 mile run, push ups, sit ups, sit and reach, shuttle run and the 40 meter.

The Lifetime Activities class has so far completed units in volleyball, dodgeball, and Chicago ball. The students are excelling at learning new games that they can continue to enjoy and stay active with throughout their lives.

In Weight Training class, students have been putting in consistent efforts every day and are beginning to see real results. They are developing a strong understanding of proper lifting techniques and the benefits of hard work and dedication.

The Jr. High Health classes have done an excellent job engaging in classroom discussions and lessons. They have learned about weight room safety, cardiovascular workouts, and key health topics like tobacco, infectious diseases, and adolescent development .

The Jr. High PE students continue to impress with their energy and positive attitudes. They've been active in the weight room and on the track, and have enjoyed some fun and competitive games of kickball.

Overall, the first semester has been a huge success in the Physical Education Department, and we're excited to see all the growth and accomplishments that the second semester will bring!



News From JH/HS Special Education Department
Mrs. Malm

Our Special Education Department is in full gear. My name is Renee Malm, and I am the new Special Education teacher at Mitchell Jr./Sr. High School.

Our paraprofessionals this year are Michelle Bremer, Laura Button, and Kobie Bradley.

With the first quarter behind us, this semester is flying by, and we are enjoying working with students.

We have been building some wonderful relationships with the amazing young people at our school. Our team works with students in the general education classroom as well as in the resource room. Students are utilizing help in all areas, and it is exciting to see their growth in such a short amount of time.

Our staff is looking forward to helping students reach their full potential during this school year. We enjoy working with these wonderful students and hope they enjoy their experiences with us as well!



Band News
Mr. Sailors

The Mitchell Bands are having a great year so far. The 6th grade students started playing their instruments mid-September, and it is always fun to see their progress! Hopefully you have heard your 6th graders practicing their instruments at home. Flutes, Clarinets, and Saxophones meet Monday, Wednesday, and every other Friday. Trumpets, Trombones, and Percussion meet Tuesday, Thursday, and every other Friday.

The 7th and 8th grade band has been working hard this semester, so I hope you have the concert on December 15th on your calendars!

The high school band has also been working hard throughout the fall semester to prepare for our many performances. In addition to our home football games, you may have seen our band marching in the Scottsbluff County Fair Parade, Homecoming Parade, and the Old West Parade where the band earned a superior rating. We also took part in Wyo Band Day at Laramie in October, where we performed during the halftime show with many bands around the Wyoming/Colorado/Nebraska area. We also played at the Veterans Day Program.

For our second quarter, we are preparing for honor band auditions and our Winter Concert on December 15th.

I am very proud of the hard work the students in each group are putting in this year. I often tell the students how great of a job they are doing, but I know it means more coming from parents, family, and community members. Encourage your students to take instruments home to perform the music they are working on in class, and congratulate them on their hard work!



MUSIC NEWS
Miss Bunnell



This last year has been a whirlwind! In the Spring of 2025, Mitchell students performed the third musical under my direction, "Frankenstein: The Musical". It was an amazing show with unique music that the kids loved! They had fun with the dramatics and dark themes of this tragic tale. I am so proud of how hard the kids worked for this show! Also, a huge shout-out to Matt Chrisman, assistant director, and Brian Hazzard, our set building specialist! Without their help and hard work, the musicals would not be possible!

Show Choir is rocking out this Fall and competed in the Old West Choir Festival, earning a Silver Award for their performance. They are looking forward to competing in the Spring, at the SPVA music contest and the district music contest. Eight talented students have been accepted into the Western Trails Honor Choir and we are eagerly awaiting the results of the High Plains Honor Choir auditions. One of our students, Corbyn Zaruba has been selected to sing the National Anthem at State Boys Wrestling. Congratulations Corbyn!

I am thrilled to start my fifth year of coaching Speech. Every season is full of laughter and growth. The best part is watching the kids take their speeches from start to finish. I am looking forward to what this year will bring, and I hope to see the state tournament again.

Junior high students have been working hard to master three-part singing. The elementary students are having a great time learning the music for their Winter concerts.

I love being a part of this school system and am looking forward to the events coming up the rest of the year! Mitchell has amazing kids who are very talented and they love to share their talents with the community. I hope to see you at as many performances as possible, whether it's a speech tournament or a choir concert. Your support means the world to our students!

NSAA National Anthem Singer– Corbyn Zaruba
Western Trails Honor Choir Members- Mattie Taylor, Corbyn Zaruba, Harlyn Bolek, Madelyn Blackstone, Rory Hazzard, Tavynn Taylor, Colten Lemoine, Terrick Carrillo
High Plains Honor Choir 2025– Mattie Taylor & Shirley Cotant

ART & WOODS DEPARTMENT
Mr. Law

MHS Art is off to another fast and active school year. We started the year with lots of drawing lessons, as drawing is the foundation of all art. We are now moving into painting techniques, with an opportunity to show our skills to downtown Mitchell. We painted some of the Chamber of Commerce business windows. We had a beautiful day and we all had fun painting some neat fall scenes. "Thank You" to our business friends and Janet Shaulis, our liaison, for the support and positive vibes!

MHS Woodshop started the year with a project designed to turn this class into a crew. The crew works together to build class projects. We have found a creative way to keep everyone working as we assembled a planter bench from donated rough cut lumber. From a video found on Youtube, we watched and made our own drawing and list of materials. As we watched, we discussed the safety of each tool and process. The first planter bench was a prototype, and we had many good discussions on how we could improve the design and processes with the project. We want to give a big shout out to the Happy Dackle in downtown Mitchell, for purchasing our first bench. "Thank You!" We reinvested and are continuing to build more benches.

MHS Industrial Tech also made a good showing this year already! We took part in Aulick's Manufacturing Day Assembly Competition. Aulicks are a major employer here in the valley, and each year they have vo- tech students come tour their trailer manufacturing facility. After lunch, teams of three compete to assemble a grain shoot that has 8 moving parts and 20 fasteners. The goal is to read the blueprint and correctly assemble a functioning shoot in the quickest time. Mitchell students took first and second place this year, with the winning team receiving Carhart winter jackets. "Well done, guys!"







Foreign Language News
Señora Herrera



In September and October, we celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with a month-long research project. Each Spanish 2 class researched a famous Latino or Spanish artist, and the country they are/were from. Each student had a different person, and some students worked together if their artists were from the same country. Also during Hispanic Heritage Month, we had a music competition and we looked at songs from each of the Spanish speaking countries. We also compared Halloween and Dia de los Muertos, and made Pan de Muertos. Currently, both Spanish 1 and 2 are reading stories in the Spanish language.

Upcoming events for our Spanish classes this year include: looking at more cultural events, having a spelling bee, looking at the different parts of language acquisition, and more quarterly projects.





Social Studies
Mr. Chancellor

GEOGRAPHY

I constantly find myself telling the students that "this isn't your parents' geography class." In the past, the emphasis was on learning the different landforms, capitals, and nations of the world. Today we still learn about those topics but it is no longer the emphasis of the study.

Geography is one the most diverse fields of study in education today. The course now focuses on a large range of the human aspect of geography. This includes the topic of economics, government, history, arts and literature, and sociology. In the ever more interconnected world, students today will, if they don't already, communicate with and interact with individuals across the globe.

During their studies this year, the students will learn about the world around them using the Mr. Help template. "M" is the study of movement, the movement of people, goods, and ideas around the globe. "R" represents the different regions of the world. Their textbook breaks the world down into cultural regions, regions that share a similar culture, so when we study a particular region, we are studying people with similar beliefs. "H-E" stands for the human-environment interaction, how both the environment affects the way certain people live as well as how those people have altered, for better or worse, the environment that supports them. "L" is for location. We still learn the location of different places on our planet so in the future students are able to at least vaguely know where the place in the news is located. With technology, this information is as simple as a google search on their phone, so this is no longer the focus of the course, but instead the beliefs of the people who live there as well as how they live. Finally, "P" for place. Students will discern specific places around the globe that have significant human and physical meaning.

AMERICAN HISTORY

The American History course offered as a junior is American History from the end of the Civil War until present day. Students are introduced to the "Birth of Modern America", the nation that they live in today. The nation resembles, but is not what the founding fathers had laid out. The goal is to understand how we got to "now" and what decisions have been made to get us to where we are. Students in the course, discuss the events that are currently happening around the world, and how the influence of our past shapes the decisions we make surrounding those issues.

As with anything in the world, there are many sides to the coin. Students are encouraged to formulate and express their own opinions on the different events in America's history. The goal is to make the connections in our past and how it fits our present. Students investigate how our world could be different if the decisions were made differently. Over the course of the year, they will see the rise of the current political parties in our nation and how they have come to represent the beliefs they do today so when it is their turn to vote (in the very near future), they can make the best decision for themselves and the nation.



Social Studies
Mr. Baker

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

The United States is a constitutional republic and a representative democracy. But why should we care about our government? It is our civic responsibility to uphold the American ideals of democracy, rights, liberty, opportunity, and equality. These principles form the framework that unites us as a nation, even as we navigate ongoing debates about what it truly means to be an American. While our nation is not without flaws, we are continuously striving toward a more perfect union.

They've been following the 2025 election season, keeping an eye on new laws being proposed, and paying attention to the latest Supreme Court decisions. We've also talked about how policies affect the economy, education, and even international issues. It's been great watching them take these topics and make sense of how government shapes daily life.

This group has shown a genuine interest in understanding what it means to be active, informed citizens. They ask great questions, challenge ideas respectfully, and bring their own perspectives to class discussions. I've learned a lot from them, and I'm proud of the way they're growing into thoughtful young adults, who care about the world they're stepping into.

WORLD HISTORY

World history is a class that includes all of humanity, not just specific countries, ethnic groups, or civilizations. Why do I encourage students to explore this broad subject? Ultimately, it's about understanding who we are and where we came from. The study of world history provides a wide-ranging look at our identity. This is both as individuals and as part of different groups.

In class, we've discussed important themes: the rise of human civilization, classical and post-classical empires, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the Age of Discovery. Through these topics, world history helps us think about what it means to be human and what makes us unique.

This sophomore group has created their own stories, both together and individually. They see that world history is more than just a record of nations, leaders, and wars; it is, at its core, the story of us. It is full of stories about people who stood up for their beliefs, sacrificed their lives for a cause, and worked hard to achieve their dreams. These stories guide us in understanding how the human experience connects with our past, present, and future.

7th/8th Grade Social Studies
Mrs. Zeiler



It has been another great start to the school year in the 7th and 8th grade social studies classes! I have been enjoying these students so much.

8th graders in Civics have gotten a mixture of American History and the workings of the American Government. We started the year discussing what led to and the outcomes of the Revolutionary War, followed by the very beginnings of our government with the creation of the Constitution. We are just finishing up our third unit on political parties and elections, from the very first political parties in the United States to how our modern presidential elections work! Even though it's not an election year, students have still been able to make great connections to what they remember from the 2024 election. A favorite activity of this unit was our mock election, where students got to create candidates to try and get elected! We will soon be diving into the Civil War and its aftermath, including how the institutions of our government played a role. Students will also be learning more about the powers of the legislative and the executive branches. The second semester will also include a unit on how the judicial system works, a topic I've found students really enjoy!

7th graders began the year discussing some of the cultural elements of the first major empires and the lesser known groups of ancient history, including the Romans, Egyptians, Germanic tribes, Celtic tribes, and more. We've also discussed how humans have had to adapt to their environments in the ancient Asia region, as well as how people deal with modern environmental disasters. Students really enjoyed talking about Hurricane Katrina, and how we can better respond to disasters like that in the future.

We just finished a unit on the world, during the Middle Ages, including the Islamic Empire and the feudal system in Medieval Europe. The students especially liked the time we spent talking about the causes and effects of the Black Death. If you get the chance, ask your student about the "fleas on rats" song.

We will finish out the first semester discussing what the Asia region was like during the Middle Ages, including Japan's samurai. Second semester will focus on the changes that swept through the world as humans began to explore!

It has been another great year in Military History! In this class, we explore the causes and effects of the major wars of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. This includes World War I, World War II, and the Cold War and the conflicts that came from it (Korea and Vietnam). We also discuss the history of war in the Middle East. We take the time to discuss the impacts of these wars on the people involved, and to recognize the sacrifices our Veterans made over the course of these conflicts

All in all, it has been a wonderful year, and I look forward to the topics we'll be diving into as the year goes on!



High School English
Mrs. Gonzales

English 9 is continuing to work through units that include reading and analyzing short stories as well as longer works of literature, working on public speaking skills with speeches, and also incorporating more composition throughout the course this year. Our main focus is working on learning and perfecting academic writing skills. This requires students to use information from our readings and research to use in their writing. Right now in English 9 we are currently finishing up our first novel, *The Alchemist*. Students will be working on a final project where they create projects that represent their identities. After this, we will be moving into a speech unit and completing a "How to" Speech. As the year progresses students will be working on an informative and persuasive speech as well as more short stories and another novel.

In English 11, we are still focusing on American literature and composition. Students have been reading short stories and have also written several analytical essays so far this year. Students just completed a unit focusing on how our nation developed through persuasive writing and public speeches. Moving forward students will be reading some short stories. This year, the Juniors will also be reading *The Great Gatsby*. As the year progresses we will be working our way through American history and literature. Each literature unit is accompanied by a composition unit as we move through the different time periods. We will also add in some ACT prep for the ACT reading and writing portions of the Spring ACT the juniors have this year.

High School English
Ms. West



In 10th Grade Composition & Grammar 1/ World Literature, tenth graders have been reviewing and expanding their foundations in grammar, usage, and function of the English language. In addition, they have been practicing using context clues to determine the meanings of words, as well as more practice with comprehending informational texts.

We spent the first several weeks of the school year reading Homer's, *The Odyssey*, tracking Odysseus' journey home from the Trojan War, and diving into Greek Mythology topics.Then, we applied knowledge of the writing process to a composition that required primary and secondary sources. Many family members participated in this unit as subjects for their writing. Thank you so much!

As we look ahead, the sophomores will continue reading text from across the globe. We will continue the semester focusing on texts from Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. Finally, we will embark on a novel study where students will have the choice between two texts - *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and *Bless Me, Ultima.* As a capstone writing unit, students will construct their first literary analysis.

This leveled English course for 10th graders is designed to provide more intensive instruction related to reading comprehension strategies, writing skills, and vocabulary study. English II students are surveying world literature texts, but I am applying several Universal Design for Learning strategies: visual representations, leveled texts, text-to-speech, sequencing and organizational supports, and built-in hyperlinks to improve reading comprehension and text accessibility.

We have also focused heavily on sentence construction, punctuation, and revising sentences and paragraphs to eliminate repetition and improve sentence fluency. We are working hard at improving our fundamental grammar and convention usage to become better writers. We applied these writing skills in a major composition that utilized a primary source and secondary source.

This group also spent several weeks in Homer's, *The Odyssey,* with film adaptations to support reading comprehension. They are also reading texts from around the world beginning in Europe, then Africa, and then Russia when we conclude the semester with George Orwell's allegory, *Animal Farm*.

Finally this semester, students will construct a piece of persuasive writing that argues in favor of a single side. We will also hold organized debates based on each topic students select to write about in order to practice effective speaking and listening skills.

In 12th Grade British Literature/ Senior Writing, senior literature students have participated in a survey of British literature beginning with the Anglo-Saxons and Old English texts like *Beowulf*, then Middle English texts focusing on King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table and Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*. We will conclude the semester with Shakespeare's sonnets and *Macbeth* as well as John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Students will write a text-dependent analysis using a specific literary perspective to analyze one of the major works studied this semester. If time remains, senior literature students will read more contemporary English works.

For senior writing, students have focused on preparing technical writing documents like resumes, cover letters, and personal statements. We have balanced the technical writing with academic essays. Students will write in researched–based and analytical forms for both language arts and non-language arts topics and conclude the semester with a formal proposal presentation utilizing primary and secondary source information, technology for visual aides advocating for a school or community-wide plan for improvement.

In 12th Grade English IV, senior students focus on practical writing skills for the workplace and reading comprehension skills for informative texts. These students focus their efforts on texts and writing projects applicable to a current job or future career choice with hypothetical research projects and writing prompts. They also select informational texts related to their areas of interest in order to practice various reading strategies most effective for technical documents.

7th & 8th Grade Reading
Mrs. Avila



Mitchell Junior High students have started the year off strong in Reading class! We have immersed ourselves in various types of literature and we are practicing strategies that good readers use when studying literature. In both 7th and 8th grade Reading we have studied various types of genres, have analyzed author's purpose, tone, mood, and much more! We are taking this study to deeper levels with classroom discussion through the use of Socratic Seminars. 7th graders are reading a book called *Refugee* by Alan Gratz; this book tells the stories of three different refugees from three different time periods. In 8th grade, *The Crossover* by Kwame Alexander; is the story of a teenage basketball player dealing with difficult life circumstances. Each grade will do a novel study project after their respective book is finished.

In both grades, many of our stories focus on the themes of living life in the middle, what it is like to be in between being a child and an adult, and some of the struggles we go through. The students connect with the text and share their own experiences while learning how to analyze texts and search for deeper meaning. We have also discussed many different literary terms this year and integrated them into our VocabularyLab assignment. This helps students recognize, understand, and apply these terms when reading. Some of the terms we have discussed so far are: personification, similes, metaphors, tone, mood, genres, etc.

Another large area of focus in Reading class is our daily VocabularyLab. We research a word of the day to help the students expand their vocabulary and develop good research skills. Students not only define the word of the day but also determine the base/root words, synonyms, antonyms, and connotations, and find symbols that connect to the word each day. This deep dive into the word helps them understand the words more fully and helps them feel confident when we encounter them in the reading selections.

As a teacher, I love to have parents encourage their children to read at home and model the practice themselves. Please encourage your students to read at home! Finding enjoyment in reading is as easy as finding something that your student connects to, whether that is a novel or an online comic. Reading is a powerful tool and can help your child get ahead in other subjects as they become more effective readers. As far as the stories that we are reading in class go, most of them are in our textbooks, however, there are many great resources out there to find books to read or listen to at home!

Most of our coursework is completed on Schoology so students have access to their homework/classwork at home. If you see something is missing on Infinite Campus, please have them check Schoology to make sure they have turned their work in. Thank you for the opportunity to teach your children. The scholars we have in Mitchell are truly amazing! I can't wait to see what they all accomplish this year, and beyond. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns at sarah.avila@mitchelltigers.org.

Yearbook Sales

Past and current yearbooks may be ordered by filling out the order forms in front of the high school office or by contacting Mrs. Law.

7th & 8th Grade English
Mrs. Law

The 7th Grade Language Arts curriculum is designed to improve students' skills as writers, readers, thinkers, and speakers by recognizing and accepting the complex world of the English language. Students will gain confidence in analyzing informational texts, writing in the styles of poets and authors, and improving abstract thinking skills. Vocabulary, spelling, grammar, and analytical skills will help students become confident writers and readers. In other words, students will become well-balanced and educated in this technological world that still relies on effective communication in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. These skills align with Nebraska State Standards in preparing students to have "critical and innovative thinking and problem solving skills" (English Language Arts Standards, 2021).

The 8th Grade Language Arts curriculum continues to improve students' skills as writers, readers, thinkers, and speakers by recognizing and accepting the complex structures of the English language. Students will gain more confidence in analyzing informational texts, writing in the styles of poets and authors, and improving abstract thinking skills. Vocabulary, spelling, grammar, and analytical skills will help students become confident writers and readers. In other words, students will become well-balanced and educated in this technological world that still relies on effective communication in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. These skills align with Nebraska State Standards in preparing students to have "critical and innovative thinking and problem solving skills" (English Language Arts Standards, 2021).

Attention: Senior Parents

- **Please remember to submit baby pictures and dedication materials by December 18, 2025 to Mrs. Law.**
- **Senior photos need to be submitted by February 13, 2026 in order to be in the yearbook, wall composite, and newspapers.**
- **Please contact Mrs. Law with any questions.**

Business Department / FBLA News / STRIV
Mrs. Gillen and Mr. Long



Our 7th grade Computer Applications students are currently learning all about Cybersecurity; including how to create strong passwords, spot phishing scams, and explore the basics of coding. They're also building their skills in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Publisher. To keep improving their typing speed and accuracy, students are practicing regularly in Typing Club. Their projects involve doing online research, designing colorful and creative presentations, and learning how to format documents. As the year goes on, they'll also be introduced to new coding ideas and fun programming activities.

Our Computer Science and Technology I and II students are developing their creativity and technical skills through a variety of hands-on projects. They're currently exploring Photoshop and learning advanced features in Microsoft Excel, including formulas and functions. Recently, students designed business cards, letterheads, flyers, and brochures using Microsoft Publisher, then showcased their work by creating their own business websites. Coming up, they'll be introduced to SketchUp, a 3D modeling program that lets them design and visualize buildings. Later this year, students will also build personal websites and compose original songs using a coding-based music program called Code Music.

The 11th and 12th grade accounting students are currently focused on journalizing and posting transactions to General Ledgers. Soon, they will engage in a manual simulation project where they will manage the books for a business. After the winter break, they will be introduced to QuickBooks for Accounting, further enhancing their skills in modern accounting practices.

The 11th and 12th grade Digital Design class is currently focused on creating a 3D printing model. Throughout the year, students have been honing their skills in video editing using Canva, advanced Photoshop techniques. They will continue to learn new skills in web design and animation.

In Personal Finance class for high school juniors, the curriculum covers a wide range of essential financial topics. Students learn to create and maintain budgets, establish emergency funds, manage and reduce debt using methods like the debt snowball, save and invest wisely, understand various types of insurance, plan for retirement, and make informed decisions about credit. They also explore the impact of money on personal relationships and set financial goals. The goal of the course is to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to make responsible financial decisions, avoid debt, and work towards a secure and prosperous financial future, emphasizing the importance of living debt-free and building long-term wealth. These classes have also been participating in the Stock Market Game with other students throughout the state of Nebraska. This is teaching students about the stock market and how to manage a financial portfolio.

8th Grade Career Exploration is a year-long class where students engage in activities and discussions aimed at helping them understand various aspects of career development and the world of work. We cover topics such as self-assessment, career options, workplace skills, and future planning. Students explore their interests, strengths, and values to gain insight into potential career paths. They learn about different industries and professions, develop essential skills like communication and problem-solving, and gain exposure to workplace expectations and etiquette. Additionally, students are encouraged to set career goals and explore how their education and personal interests can shape their future careers. This class aims to provide a foundation for informed career decision-making and helps students better understand the opportunities and challenges they may encounter as they move forward in their educational and professional journeys.

FBLA

On Thursday, October 23, 2025, Mitchell High School's FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) held its member and officer installation ceremony, welcoming a dedicated group of leaders and new members. The officers for this year are Mattie Taylor as President, Elly Paetow as Vice President, Kaidyn Patterson as Secretary, Kate Pieper as Treasurer, Maleah Jackson as Reporter, Thomas Esselstein as Historian, and Max Lydon as Parliamentarian. A total of 53 members were officially installed

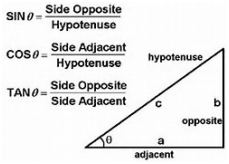
FBLA is committed to community and school service, engaging in various projects such as helping with elementary gift wrapping, organizing a Christmas store, participating in the Festival of Hope, and leading trash clean-up efforts. This year, a new Thanksgiving tradition was introduced to express gratitude to educators by bringing around a snack trolley. Additionally, the FBLA successfully launched a winter wear drive to support those in need as the colder months approach.

Striv.tv

Media Design and Production will explore careers in the Media and Production fields. We will also be producing weekly segments and social media posts weekly that incorporate many different types of segments from interviews, announcements, sports, and game shows, which allow students to learn how to video edit using various platforms and equipment. The students in the class have been learning a lot and having fun while creating these segments. In addition to the news show, we are also live streaming home and some away events using the Hudl TV platform. Things that we will be streaming this year are athletic events, concerts, and graduation. This allows grandparents, parents, and alumni from near and far to stay connected with Mitchell Jr/Sr High School and allow our students to share our story! Great things and great technology opportunities are happening in this class! You can catch everything that we do on our channel page at striv.tv/Mitchell. You can also follow the Tiger Vision Instagram account (@mpstigervision) for schedules, updates, and photos.

MATHCOUNTS

MATHCOUNTS is bigger and better as they prepare for a run at qualifying for state.



Math Department
Mr. Chrisman, Mr. Harriger, Mr. Folck, Mrs. Peters

What is old often becomes new. That is the theme in Room 154 this year. Cybersecurity has returned as a course offering. The students have completely rebuilt a personal computer, learned how to install Linux, and will be shifting to a software and security focus after rejuvenating our 3-D printers.

We are maintaining numbers in our dual-credit math offerings in Trigonometry and Nebraska Math Readiness Project courses. Applied Statistics and College Algebra will be offered during the Spring semester.

Esports is in our second year, but on a new platform. More students than last are playing chess, Super Smash Brothers, League of Legends, Marvel Rivals, and Rocket League this fall. This spring we are looking forward to Fortnite, Valorant, Mario Kart, and a mystery game to be determined.

Quiz Bowl is welcoming a lot of new faces this year who are eager to step up and replace a strong departing senior class.

Lastly, we are anticipating more speakers competing in Speech this year, and are already in the preliminary stages of getting pieces ready to compete.

In Algebra I class, we are pushing hard into solving equations and inequalities. Which is a big bulk of the class. I tell the students that once we start solving we will not stop for the remainder of the year. Other concepts such as number sense, geometry, and data will be mixed in to the class. This will give them a better background for Geometry next year.

In Algebra II, we are progressing nicely into curves and out of the linear functions which were studied in Algebra I. Students are finding the class a little more interesting and challenging as the concepts push into curves and systems. The students are working very hard to master the concepts that will be used next year in College Algebra.

Business Math is a senior level class. This is a fun group of students as they are studying some concepts that will hopefully help them manage money as they prepare to leave high school and enter the job market or college. We are studying checking and savings accounts, payroll, running a business, and investing money. We have some interesting discussions about some of the ideas the students have.

The Geometry students have been working hard this year. The students have been using some technology to enhance their learning, including IXL, Desmos, Geogebra, and Schoology. Students have been practicing with unit conversions, understanding the basic building blocks of Geometry, transformations, symmetry, and distance calculations, and extentions of algebraic concepts, among other things. We also completed a unit where students learned about logical arguments and the need for providing reasoning for answers, whether that be in math class or in the real world.

In the coming months, students will be calculating with 2- and 3-dimensional shapes, investigating special properties of certain quadrilaterals, working with proportions and similarity, applying properties of circles, and learning some basic trigonometry concepts.

The 8th grade Beginning Algebra students have hit the ground running this year. The students are working hard to learn not only the 8th grade math standards, but also many of the high school standards for Algebra. We have spent the first part of the year extending what they have previously learned, while also introducing new concepts. In the process, the students have used IXL, Desmos, and Schoology to improve their learning experience. So far this year, students have worked with fractions, decimals, number subsets, exponents and radicals, scientific notation, multi-step equations, and graphing. The students have been challenged, but they have responded and are learning quickly.

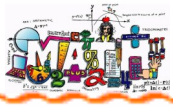
Over the next few months, the Beginning Algebra students will continue solving and graphing more difficult equations, working with quadratics, and solving systems of equations. The students will also get to jump into Geometry concepts by learning about triangles, the Pythagorean Theorem, and area or volume of figures.

Pre-Algebra students have been putting forth great effort as they work on skills to transition from Jr. High Math to Algebra next year. Students have been working to review and expand on many of the math skills they learned last year. Some of the main topics covered so far include decimals, fractions, integers, number subsets, graphing, exponents, writing equations, and proportions. IXL has been a great tool to assist students in learning and practicing their skills.

As we work towards being ready for Algebra next year, the students can look forward to lessons on percentages, solving equations, probability, and some concepts of Geometry. The students appreciate being able to actually see how they will be able to take some of the math from the classroom and actually use it in the real world. They will have plenty of opportunity to see that with the topics coming up.

Several 7th and 8th grade students have been practicing math once per week during lunch in preparation for our math competition in February. There are currently about 12 members and they are excited to be able to compete against other schools.

The seventh grade math students have transitioned smoothly to Jr. High and Saxon Math Course 2. We continue to review and learn many concepts in Algebra, Geometry, Computation, Data, Probability, and Problem Solving. We review concepts and are assessed after every five lessons. We also continue to drill our concepts and applications with AIMSweb and IXL. Our goal is to prepare the best we can for eighth grade Pre-Algebra or Algebra classes, while maturing and enjoying our move to the Jr/Sr High building.



Family and Consumer Science Class News
Ms. Wiegel



Season's Greetings and Hello from the Family and Consumer Sciences Classroom. The 2025-2026 school year is off to a great start in the FACS department. Students have completed a variety of activities and projects including the MHS version of "The Great Food Truck Race". In which students create a business plan for a food truck of their choice. In addition, they design a model of their truck, develop a menu and make various items from their menu which they share in a competition style tasting with various classes at the high school.

The Jr. High students have also been busy in the kitchen, making a variety of items to share with friends and family. Students have also explored a variety of areas related to Family and Consumer Sciences including, but not limited to, food science dietetics, food production management, nutrition, family structures and management, and hospitality and tourism. Most recently, FACS III students created their own games, as part of a unit on the importance of play, that were shared with the preschool classes at the elementary. The Adult Living class has been focusing on infant development and care. These students have been fortunate to have access to the RealCare Infant simulators as part of this unit. Whether learning about life after high school or how to prepare meals, there is always something cooking in the FACS classroom.

Industrial Technology / Agricultural Education
Mr. Dobry



This year has been a good year for us so far in the Agricultural Department. We have many more classes for the students to take, and they seem to be filling them up nicely. We currently have a multitude of students in the welding classes, as we now have two different periods along with some independent studies. Our plant science class has continued to build onto the greenhouse that we created last year. We are excited to get new plants growing for the year. So far on the FFA side of things, we have 42 students who have already competed in Range Judging, qualified for state competition in Land Judging, and had a Senior Livestock Judging team that also qualified for state competition. There are many more competitions that will take place this year and we are excited to see how the kids compete. In October, we took 12 students to Indianapolis for the National Convention. This was a new and exciting experience for us. The students were able to see what Nationals was like, and it gave a goal to work towards going into State Convention.



Intro to Education

This course is an introduction to schooling and education for anyone planning to become a teacher, preparing for a career in education, or just curious about the profession. So far, students have been exploring the foundations of education, looking at contemporary issues in schools, and learning about the many roles educators play; not just inside the classroom, but throughout their communities. They've also been engaging in research projects to better understand how education works, and even creating their own personal philosophies of education.

More specifically, the course dives into the historical, sociological, and philosophical foundations of education; school governance, finance, and policies; legal, moral, and ethical issues; and teacher professionalism. Students are encouraged to use these topics as lenses to analyze how educational theory meets practice.

It's really exciting to watch these students take these lessons and start thinking critically about the kind of educators they want to become, and how they can make a positive difference in the lives of their students. By the end of the course, the goal is not just to build knowledge about education, but to help each student develop a framework for themselves as a professional, a lifelong learner, and an active, thoughtful citizen.



SCIENCE DEPARTMENT
Ms. Clark, Mr. Shoopman, Mr. Powell

7TH & 8TH GRADE SCIENCE

This year is off to a great start! As 7th and 8th graders, we get to learn about a lot of different sciences. Examples of that are life science, biology, genetics, physical science, chemistry, earth science, and astronomy.

The 8th grade has been in the areas of biology and genetics. They are currently working on understanding what DNA is and how Punnett squares are used. They will be starting their dragon DNA project real soon.

7th graders have been in the physical science and chemistry areas learning about matter and atoms. They will be starting the periodic table and the molecule project real soon. We are looking forward to using to using our new skills and knowledge to apply to apply it to many more labs, activities and learning!

In Exploratory Science, we like to explore the different realms of science. During this class, students discuss and come up with areas they want to focus on and experiment in. Students are responsible for doing research, making a hypothesis, developing the procedure and materials list, doing the experiment, and lastly coming up with conclusions on the experiment. Students have enjoyed the variety of experiments and research they get to do.

EARTH SCIENCE

Students have been working on fundamentals of chemistry. They have learned about the scientific method and proper experimental design techniques. Additionally, they have learned about the states of matter, the atom, and chemical bonding, naming, and reactions. They have constructed timelines of the history of the universe relative to a single calendar year and have completed various labs. They have also had a chance to see multiple demonstrations including how a metal (sodium) will react with water and start on fire! After the chemistry unit section, students will learn about the fundamentals of both physics and earth science completing units on motion, force, energy, waves, electricity, plate tectonics, space science, climate to name a few.

CHEMISTRY

Students have learned about matter and energy, atomic models and subatomic particles, quantum mechanics, chemical bonding, naming, and reactions, stoichiometry, and empirical / molecular formulas. They have also completed a number of laboratories and learned how to write a formal lab paper just as it would be published in a science journal. They will continue with the gas laws, net ionic equations, acids and bases, and titration as well as other topics.

PHYSICS

Students have completed units on motion, uniform acceleration, friction, two dimensional motion, and gravity. They calculated velocity while riding on a hovercraft and made rockets from everyday objects. Students have also learned to solve multiple step problems and calculated acceleration due to gravity using pendulums. They will cover units over energy, simple machines, electricity and magnetism, waves, as well as others.

BIOLOGY

This year in Biology, we are using more class discussion, interaction, and investigation. These methods of instruction and learning have been working very well. We have discovered that all biology has a place in our lives at some point. We are currently finishing a Biome project. The students chose a Biome and did research over it. They have learned about the climate, the plants, the animals, the seasons, and other interesting facts about the biomes. They have learned how to work with a microscope and have discovered how much a microscope can enhance an object. We are now beginning to work on atomic and molecular parts of Biology.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

To begin this year, we started working in the xeriscaped flowerbed in front of our school building. Some plants needed to be replaced, so the students did research on different plants that would be more successful surviving this placement and conditions. They also replaced the fountain in the flowerbed. We have completed projects about raptors, which included information about their lives and their environments.

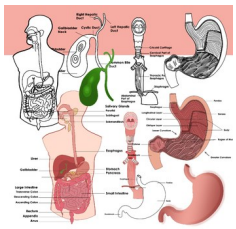
The most recent project for our class has been about imaginary animals. Students rolled dice to determine the various body parts, placement, size, and color. They then drew their imaginary animals according to their data sheets. Students will now take each animal, explain the environment the animal will live in and the adaptation that will be used. The students will be determining what their animals eat, how they defend themselves, reproduce, and survive in their environment.

ANIMAL SCIENCE

This year, we have worked on classifications and comparisons of various animals. Students have become more familiar with the classification process, how animals belong to different groups, as well as how they belong to similar groups. We are currently working on researching and designing a chicken house. They are determining how many chickens they will need and the amount and type of materials they will need to set up an effecient chicken house.

ANATOMY/PHYSIOLOGY

We have been very busy this year. In the classroom, we have learned about the systems involved in the body, what they include and their function, levels of organization, the different regions and planes of the body. We have also worked with directional terms to orient ourselves with the correct body terms and regions of the body. We are looking forward to learning more about the skeletal system which includes the bones and muscles



Elementary Office News

Mrs. Fillingham & Mrs. Sisson

Please utilize the phone system when calling to let us know your child is absent. The office personnel check the phone messages upon arrival each morning. For best results, please leave attendance messages on Mrs. Sisson's phone. If no one answers, after dialing, her extension is number '1' on your phone.

When calling before or after school hours, other extensions are listed below. If calling during regular school hours, please ask Mrs. Sisson or Mrs. Fillingham to transfer you to the appropriate person, or they would be happy to take a message for you.

Thank You!

The Elementary Phone Number is 308-623-2828.
After Hours…

Mrs. Kearns — Principal Messages — Dial 0
Mrs. Sisson — Attendance or Office Messages — Dial 1
Mrs. Fillingham— School or Office Messages — Dial 6
Mrs. Thomas — School Nurse/Medical Issues — Dial 4

The School Cafeteria has a direct line. For messages regarding cafeteria information, please dial 308-623-1945.





Tentative Elementary Track Meet Date:
Monday, May 11th, 2026

Elementary Graduation

6th Grade— May 18th @ 7:00
Kindergarten— May 19th @ 2:00



Nebraska Child Passenger Safety Law Update

- Children ride rear-facing up to age two or until they reach the upper weight or height limit allowed by the car seat's manufacturer.
- All children up to age eight must ride correctly secured in a federally approved child safety seat/belt positioning booster.
- Children up to age eight must ride in the back seat, as long as there is a back seat equipped with a seat belt and not occupied by other children under eight years of age.
- Children ages eight to eighteen must ride secured in a seat belt or child safety seat (belt positioning booster).



Violation carries a $25 fine plus associated court costs and 1 point may be assessed against the operator's driving record. (Statute # 60-6,267)

Toward Zero Deaths

Click It or Ticket Day & Night

SAFE KIDS NEBRASKA

Kinder Connection News

Mrs. Wilson

We are in our fourth year of Kinder Connection and the program has grown to an incredible enrollment. This program had a very successful first year and second year. The Kinder kiddos that went into kindergarten this year are shining bright and leading the group. Kinder Connection is a transitional kindergarten program designed specifically for young kindergarteners. These kindergarteners have birthdays typically between May 1 through July 31. They do not qualify for preschool but are on the younger side of kindergarten. In this program, we immerse ourselves into a kindergarten day as far as recess, lunch, music, and PE. Our classroom instruction, however, is designed specifically for our younger learners. We spend much of our day learning social skills such as sharing, problem resolution, patience, and acceptance. We build on skills such as holding our pencil/crayon, cutting, coloring, and gluing. We build a foundation for learning letter names, letter sounds, visual phonics, and the correct formations of the letters. We build a foundation for learning our numbers, counting and forming the numbers. We are learning shapes and colors. We move at a pace that is kid directed and kid centered. Again, I am super excited about this specialized program, and we are having a blast this year!





Kindergarten News
Mrs. Bellairs, Ms. Scott, Mrs. Soule

We have had a great start to our Kindergarten year. In Reading, we began the year learning and reviewing our letter and letter sounds. We have practiced rhyming words and we are reciting nursery rhymes. We have quickly moved onto blending sounds together and working with word families. Each day we practice a growing list of sight words that help us become fluent, confident readers.

In Math, we started the year reviewing our numbers and counting. We are working toward our big goal of counting all the way to 100 by the end of the year! We are now learning to write number sentences, create and read graphs, and compare quantities using "more" and "less".

In Science, we explored living and nonliving things and discussed how living things can change and impact our environment. We recently wrapped up our unit on weather and weather patterns. Our young scientists loved observing and talking about different types of weather!

In Social Studies, we have learned about family and cultural traditions. Now, we are excitedly preparing for Thanksgiving and our special Kindergarten Thanksgiving Feast!

Thank you for your continued support at home. Our Kindergarteners are working hard, growing every day, and can't wait to share all they've learned.





1st Grade News
Ms. Helgerson, Mrs. King, Mrs. Osmera

We are loving our first graders! There are many new, exciting things for them: desks, homework, spelling tests, Accelerated Reader! Despite all of these "firsts", they are all acclimating well.

Our students are reading at various levels. We help the students best by leveling our classes and tailoring our instruction to fit their needs. Even though the content may be different, each of us is assisting students build and solidify their reading foundation. We do this through blending sounds to make words, reading connected text, exploring vocabulary words, and various comprehension strategies. We encourage our students to read at home every night!

We enjoy listening to the first graders become amazing readers through the help of Accelerated Reader (A.R.). Students are able to pick books that interest them in their level. They bring it home to read with mom, dad, or another adult at least three times. Then, they bring the book back and let their reading teacher know they are ready for an A.R. test. The students strive to get the questions right in order to hit goals for various prize levels. Everyone's favorite prize is the A.R. party!!

The first graders are becoming quite the mathematicians! They are digging deep into the number world. The students have been learning about number placement, what numbers come before and after, and learning rules to adding and subtracting. Also, the students have been busy counting dimes and pennies, telling time, making shapes on geoboards, and covering polygons with pattern blocks. We have been using ordinal numbers to recite the months of the year as well as using them to write the date the "short way". They are always excited to learn this once they have mastered writing it the complete way.

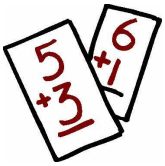
In science, we studied the sun, moon, and stars. We did a shadow experiment learning about how and why our shadows move throughout the day.

In social studies, the students were taught the history of Veterans Day and what it means. Also, our standards are allowing our students to visit holiday traditions around the world. Soon, we will discuss how our traditions are similar and different to other countries. Students are always amazed when they learn about other cultures and what an exciting way to gain more knowledge about holidays.

In October, we were able to take a field trip to the Wildcat Hills Nature Center. The students were so engaged as they learned about different animal skins, habitats, and animals native to our area. They were excited to complete a scavenger hunt within the nature center followed by a hike in the hills. We ended our field trip with learning how pumpkins grow, picking our own pumpkin, and successfully completing a corn maze!

In our first-grade classroom, we use positive incentives to encourage kindness, responsibility, and good behavior through two special programs: Bucket Filler Awards and the Lucky Duck Award. The Bucket Filler Awards celebrate students who consistently show positive actions throughout the week—such as returning homework on time, keeping all their behavior sticks, and helping or encouraging classmates. These students are recognized as "Bucket Fillers" for spreading kindness and making our classroom a better place. Additionally, each morning we select a "Lucky Duck," and only the teacher knows who that duck is. Throughout the day, the teacher observes that student's behavior, and if they have a positive day, they are revealed at the end of the day, receive a small treat from our prize basket, and take home a "Lucky Duck" note to share their success with their family. These incentives motivate students to make good choices, support one another, and take pride in their positive behavior in 1st grade.

Continue to read with your child every day, practice math facts, discover patterns around you, and encourage your children to ask why to promote learning and discovery! Thank you for all of your support!



2nd Grade News
Mrs. Cheek, Mrs. Broussard, Mrs. Hessler

Second grade has gotten off to a great start! We have been working hard in reading, becoming better readers every day! By Christmas we will be through the first three units of our reading series. This will lead us into our Christmas Around the World unit.

In Math, we are about finished with our addition facts for mastery. We will soon start our subtraction facts and continue to practice counting money, telling time, and measuring to the nearest inch.

In Science, we have been studying earth's landforms and how they can change. We took a field trip to the Extension Office to partake in AgSplosion, where we learned about agriculture, life cycles of animals, and technology in relation to farming.

In Social Studies, we have learned about our community of Mitchell, past and present. Along with this, we have been talking about different cultures and researching our own family heritage.

In the second semester of school, we will be learning how to do research reports, learn our cursive letters, and continue growing our math and reading skills.





3rd Grade News
Ms. Engstrom, Mrs. Reisig, Miss Walters

The third grade classes have a total of 47 unique students that have been very busy so far this year. We are learning responsibility each day by turning in homework on time, being prepared for classes with the appropriate materials and reading Accelerated Reader Books.

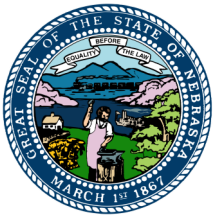
Our afternoon classes include social studies, language arts, and science. In Language, we have been using our Chromebooks to research spiders and write reports on them. We have also been working on grammar, and writing skills, such as writing good sentences and paragraphs.

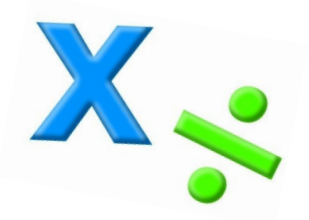
In Science, we have been learning about life cycles and different traits of plants and animals.

In Social Studies, we have been studying communities, the five different regions of the United States, and the different continents and oceans.

We also have been using a Math program called XtraMath where they can practice all their math facts on their chrome book. It starts with addition and then they work up to subtraction, multiplication, and division. Another fun program the students like to do is called "99".

We have gone on a couple field trips this year. Our first one in September was to the YMCA Trails West Camp for a Fitness and Nutrition Day. The students really enjoyed the day full of activities. In October, we went to the Adams Family Pumpkin Patch where we got to pick our own pumpkins and learn about how pumpkins and sugar beets grow.





4th Grade News

Ms. Clarke, Mrs. Briggs, Mrs. Feltgen

We are excited to add Mrs. Andrea Feltgen as a new 4th grade teacher.

In September and October, we took a trip back in time visiting Flowerfield School in Harrisburg, Nebraska. Students and teachers experienced a school day back in 1888. Students dressed in pioneer clothing, brought lunches appropriate for the time, and participated in everyday school activities. 4th grade also attended activities at the Legacy of the Plains Museum. Thanks to all the volunteers that help to organize and run all these amazing events!

We are diving into many new adventures in 4th grade. We are continuing to learn and grow with our updated Wonders reading and science curriculum. IXL is a program that all 4th graders are participating in. This is computer based program targets reading and math skills. Students are working towards improving these skills. We are learning all about Nebraska history, Science, developing our writing skills, continuing to work on reading comprehension, and our Accelerated Reading.

We are looking forward to experiencing all that 4th grade has to offer.



5th and 6th Grade News

Mrs. Schaffer, Mrs. Walton, Mr. Becker, Mrs. Bohl, Mrs. Wyatt

There are 86 fifth and sixth graders this year in the Mitchell Elementary. The core subjects are departmentalized with the following teachers: Jenny Bohl- Language Arts and sixth grade homeroom, David Becker- Math and sixth grade homeroom, Emily Wlaton-Science and fifth grade homeroom, Jami Schaffer-Social Studies and fifth grade homeroom, and Valerie Wyatt-Reading and sixth grade homeroom.

Red Ribbon Week was a huge success. We participated in the Red Ribbon Olympics and Red Ribbon themed dress-up days. We are "Proud to be Drug Free!"

5th and 6th Grade Science

The 5th graders have been busy learning about Matter and made their own salt lakes to understand what happens when we overuse our resources. We are now exploring Ecosystems and Energy in Ecosystems. While studying adaptations, they designed their own animal, named it and gave it an appropriate place in our ecosystem.

The 6th grade has learned about heat transfer and thermal energy by designing an igloo to keep heat away from our ice penguins. We are now learning about cells and will continue learning about the entire human body.

5th and 6th Grade Social Studies

The 5th graders have been very busy! So far this year we have learned about ancient cultures such as the Olmec, Maya, Aztec, and Inca and early Native American groups. We have also learned about European explorers and the impact they had on the Native Americans. The 5th graders are now studying the colonization of America and will soon be starting a unit on the Revolutionary War. They are also busy memorizing the states and capitals of the United States.

The 6th grade is learning about Ancient World History this year. So far, we have learned about the ancient civilizations of Sumer, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Kush. As we learn about each civilization, we talk about the G.R.A.P.E.S. of each group of people. G.R.A.P.E.S. stands for Geography, Religion, Achievements, Politics, Economy, and Society. The 6th graders also create hands-on projects for some of the civilizations as they learn about them. Other upcoming ancient civilizations include India, China, Rome, and Greece.

5th and 6th Grade Math

We are off and running with a great new school year in the math room! The 5th graders have been busy solving word problems, determining the orientation of lines, identifying fractions, and listing the factors of whole numbers. We have also been adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing whole numbers and decimals, adding fractions, and finding averages.

The 6th graders have been working on finding area and perimeter, solving fractional parts of whole groups in word problems, identifying measurements, adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing whole numbers, fractions, and decimals, and reducing fractions. They have also been identifying place value in whole numbers and decimal numbers, working with elapsed time in hours and minutes, finding unknown numbers in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division problems, and representing data using graphs.

5th and 6th Grade Reading

Our 5th and 6th grade students have been off to a strong start in reading this year! We utilize the Wonders reading series. Our focus remains on comprehension, vocabulary, structural analysis, and fluency. Students are becoming comfortable using both the Wonders website and Google Classroom to access lessons, practice activities, and assessments, while still spending plenty of time reading from their textbooks and participating in group discussions and guided reading lessons. The stories and articles we have explored include expository text, informational text, narrative nonfiction, and realistic fiction. We are also utilizing IXL to provide targeted skill practice that supports what we learn in class.

This year, we have added more opportunities for creativity and engagement. Students are completing choice boards and hands-on projects that allow them to demonstrate understanding in different ways. In the afternoons, students participate in small novel groups, reading and discussing books together to deepen comprehension and critical thinking. Looking ahead, 6th grade students will begin working on book reports next quarter, an exciting chance to apply their reading and analysis skills in new ways.

5th and 6th Grade Language

We continue working on writing and grammar skills in Language Arts. We also practice spelling, and it is part of the Language Arts grade, not an individual class grade in the gradebook. Students receive their spelling list every Monday and can then practice all week with a take home list. Wednesday and Thursday are devoted to grammar skills and practice. Students get extra practice using IXL for various grammar and writing skills. We spend the rest of the week on various writing skills and projects. Most recently, sixth grade students completed a personal narrative, outlining an important event in their life. Fifth grade students wrote some very convincing argumentative pieces. They also enjoy writing short essays on prompts given to them in class.

Both grade levels keep a digital journal that includes notes for each unit. All notes are also posted to Google Classroom. These are great tools when studying for tests and are available for all homework. A composition notebook is also used for daily sentences and writing prompts, where we practice proofreading and editing skills. Looking ahead, we will begin some opinion writing and research. The students are also looking forward to building various computer-based projects, including a slide show, to enhance our digital citizenship. Digital Citizenship is a large focus area, with the use of more technology built into our school days. Feel free to ask your students to show you around Google Classroom and their digital Grammar Notebook. Their Google Classroom files are accessible on ANY computer.

Title I Reading

Mrs. Dobry

Title I Reading is a program that allows our district to aid students in need of additional instruction. As an all Title school, we offer our support to all children. Through the Title I Reading Program, we identify and assist students who may need extra help developing strong reading skills. Using ongoing testing and evaluations, we design and implement targeted interventions that focus on the five key areas by the National Reading Panel as essential to reading success: **phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, fluency and vocabulary**. Student progress is closely monitored throughout the year, and adjustments to instruction and placement are made as needed to ensure continued growth.

Our dedicated paraeducators also support classroom instruction by providing both Reading and Math interventions.

At Mitchell Elementary, the success of every student is at the heart of our Title I program.



NO SCHOOL

December 19-31

January 1-5

February 13

February 16

March 12-13

April 3-6

Last Day of School..

May 20

Physical Education News

Mr. Broussard

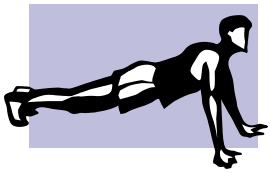
Here at Mitchell Elementary we find physical education to be a very important subject. This class is designed to help kids live an active and healthy lifestyle. The goal for Mitchell Elementary physical education class is to introduce kids to a wide variety of different sports or activities. Our expectations of the students isn't to have them master all the skills in a couple sports/activities, it is to have the students feel competent in several different sports or activities. If kids learn the basic skills, rules to the games and feel comfortable playing them, they are more likely to continue to participate in those activities outside of school and become lifelong movers.

While kids engage in the different types of games and activities we also want to teach them about good sportsmanship and how to compete the proper way. They know that it is okay to be competitive but they have to understand how to act when they win and understand how to act when they lose.

Along with learning the skills, knowledge, and sportsmanship that come with different games and activities, we also like to build strength and agility into our lessons. During games, we focus on a key skill or strategy, but there's always some exercise mixed in to keep everyone moving and active! For our older students, each class starts with a short workout where we talk about which muscles they're using and how those exercises can help them in future activities — both in and out of class.

This year has been great so far with great participation by the students. We have been fortunate enough this year to get more PE equipment and expand our curriculum. We are excited to introduce some new skills and games throughout the year. Your son or daughter would love to share what they have learned in physical education class up to this point in the year, so when you get a chance just ask them. We would like to thank the parents for helping us keep our gym floor in good shape by supplying your kids with gym shoes!

Thanks again!



1, 2, 3 & 4



Elementary Music

Miss Bunnell, Mr. Sailors

What Really Happens in a Music Classroom???

Believe it or not there is much more going on in a music classroom than just music. Yes, we sing and play instruments, but through those activities there is much more happening. Music involves using many different brain functions including: motor control, imagination, hearing, sight, and memory. Music inspires and evokes emotions in a healthy way. It teaches how to create, evaluate, analyze, understand and remember. Music involves math, science, history and foreign language. There is much more that goes on in a music classroom besides music.





Counseling News Mrs. Zeiler



It has been an amazing start to the 2025–2026 school year as your new school counselor! It's been such a joy getting to know all of our returning Mitchell students and welcoming our new families. The elementary building has been buzzing with excitement and full of fun activities!

We recently wrapped up Red Ribbon Week (October 27–31) with a variety of engaging events including a pep rally, bookmark design contest, and coloring contest. Our students and staff had a wonderful time learning about the importance of making healthy, safe choices.

We're keeping the fun going with our "Wacky Wednesdays," where students and staff can show their school spirit by dressing up for each week's theme. We kicked off November with western attire and will finish the year in festive Christmas sweaters and shirts!

Our Student Council continues to shine as leaders in our school and community. The group hosted a Peanut Butter Drive (November 3–7) to support our local food pantries and will organize a "Cash for Cans" Food Drive from December 1–12. These contributions make a real difference for families in need, and we're proud of our students' commitment to helping others.

This year, one of my main goals as your school counselor is to continue the wonderful traditions already in place at Mitchell while introducing new opportunities for growth. In counseling lessons, we've been focusing on goal setting for academic success, building a growth mindset, and strengthening social-emotional skills. I believe it's essential to teach students the knowledge and strategies they need to make positive, healthy choices for life.

Our Student Council has also worked hard to improve our school environment. Proceeds from our recent bake sale went toward purchasing new playground balls and chalk. The group is also brainstorming creative ways to continue fundraising for future improvements.

Getting to know our students and families has truly been the highlight of my year so far. I value open communication and encourage families to reach out anytime with questions or concerns about their child.

Library News – Mrs. Harder-Villagrana



I am excited to keep you updated on all the exciting happenings in our library. This year, we started off by focusing on library procedures and expectations, ensuring that our students understand how to make the most of their library experience. Now, let's dive into the highlights of the past few months and what's coming up!

Our Kindergarten and 1st-grade students have been immersed in the wonderful world of Jory John's books. From "The Bad Seed" to "The Good Egg," we have explored his delightful stories and enjoyed many laughs along the way. We are eagerly looking forward to reading his latest book, "Humble Pie." Jory John's books have sparked joy and laughter in our young readers!

Our 2nd and 3rd graders are wrapping up a fun novel that has captivated their imaginations. As we approach the holiday season, we have planned some exciting holiday-themed reading activities to keep the festive spirit alive in our library. Our 3rd graders have been doing an amazing job showing positive behavior and teamwork in the library. They have been earning stickers toward "Book Buddies," a fun incentive that rewards responsibility, kindness, and engagement during library time. They have already earned enough stickers to build their Book Buddy House and are now working toward adopting their very first Book Buddy. This program is a wonderful motivator and celebrates all the great things happening in our library community

This year, our 4th, 5th, and 6th graders have been exploring Canva! Students are learning to create digital projects using text, images, layouts, and some of Canva's newest features. This work helps them build real-world digital communication skills—creativity, design thinking, and responsible technology use—that will support them in future school assignments and prepare them for the increasing use of digital tools in middle school and beyond. We're proud of the creativity and confidence they're showing as they bring their ideas to life.

After the holiday break, we will be diving into digital citizenship lessons. It is crucial for our students to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate the digital world responsibly and safely. We will be covering topics such as online etiquette, internet safety, and responsible technology use. Stay tuned for more information on these important lessons!

We want to express our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who attended our book fair during parent-teacher conferences. Your support was incredible, and we raised a significant amount of money to purchase new books for our library. Our next book fair will be held in February during conferences, so mark your calendars!

Thank you for your ongoing support and enthusiasm for our library. If you have any questions or suggestions, please don't hesitate to reach out. Happy Holidays!

Elementary Special Education – Mrs. Littau and Mrs. Pankonin

The Mitchell Elementary Special Education Department is having a great start to our school year. The Mitchell Elementary Special Education staff consists of Special Services Director Jamie Batterman, and two classroom teachers, Alyxis Littau (grades K-3) and Kristin Pankonin (grades 4-6). Special Education paraprofessional support includes: Jackson Mitchell, Karen Whiting, Katherine McCormick, Laura Hubbard, Marissa Peterson, Rebecca Parker, Vanessa Hernandez, Sam Costello, Shawn Francescato, and Winter Keener. Mitchell Elementary staff and students are excited to continue to work on students' individual learning goals.

Mitchell Elementary service providers from ESU #13 include: Michelle Wiemer – Physical Therapist, Alexis Juelfs—Physical Thereapist Assistant, Amanda Anderson – Occupational Therapist from ESU #13, Sierra Ostdiek – Speech-Language Pathologist from ESU #13, Megan Macy -Vision Specialist from ESU #13, Sarah Preston and Heather Esterdahl - Hearing Specialists from ESU #13, and Dr. Jamie Sato - School Psychologist from ESU #13.



Tiger Cub Preschool News - Mrs. Jacobs and Miss Campbell

Casie Campbell is our half day preschool teacher. Julie Jacobs is our full day preschool teacher. Patty Fetters, Faith Missel, and Miranda Nichols assist in the preschool classrooms.

The Mitchell Volunteer Fire Department visited our classroom in October. We were able to explore their trucks and learn about fire safety. Guests from the High School Facs III class have visited us a few times. They have taught us nursery rhymes, art lessons, and played games with us.

Each day, we are learning to recognize all lowercase letters and sounds. In addition to letters, we have been working on recognizing our numbers, shapes, colors, and counting to 20. We have been identifying rhyming words, counting syllables in our names, and learning to write our names. We are learning how to hear beginning and ending sounds in words. We are practicing our social skills by learning to identify our feelings, take turns, share, and work with our friends. We are looking forward to hatching chicks and visiting the Zoo next Spring.

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mitchelltigers.org

The mission of Mitchell Public Schools is to inspire and educate all students for a lifetime of success.