

The Cadet Courier

19th January 2026



Sensory Socialization

FCCLA Students partake in a special education project.

By Samantha Fehrer

West Point-Beemer students of the Child Development class, Bella Gross, Kaydence Voyles, and Katherine Aleman, recently put together a project regarding

interactions between special education students and regular students. On November 19th, these individuals, alongside the rest of their class, traveled to the Elementary classrooms to conduct an activity with select students.

The planning of this project first started on September 28th. The first step

was to decide what activity to do with the students. After much consideration, the girls decided on creating sensory bottles.

“We chose to do this project because we felt like students didn't really understand how special needs students interacted with each other and how to interact with

The Cadet Courier

19th January 2026

special needs students,” Bella Gross stated.

In order to complete the project, they needed to collect a few items to execute this project. The items included bottles, food dye, sparkles, and glue. In total they spent \$52.

“We created instructional slides to show step-by-step directions for the students to improve their understanding,” Bella said.

In the process of their project, they encountered how difficult completing the project was. It was difficult to plan the day of the project. The members stated how they should’ve come an hour earlier, so they could have more time to plan and set up the activity.

“We wanted to try to observe them more, and pair up a special education student with a high school student,” Bella talked about.

On the contrary, there were a lot of things that they did well. One of those things were the interactions between the students. The girls believed that they did a good job on pairing the students up to gain that interaction.

“We chose to do this project because we felt like students didn’t really understand how special needs students interacted with each other and how to interact with

special needs students,” Bella mentioned.

For their follow-up, they conducted interviews with the teachers to gain insight on how they handle their students within their classroom. These interviews helped them gain more knowledge than they already had. It helped them plan to see if they would do a project like this again. The girls wanted to spread awareness about how special education students need sensory support and general education.

As they reflect back on their project, this successful opportunity has allowed them to not only learn, but grow as individuals. They will be able to take this project and compete in an FCCLA STAR (Students Taking Action with Recognition) event to see if they will make it to state!

Swanson Shines

Historic season for Hunter Swanson

By Jesus Montoya

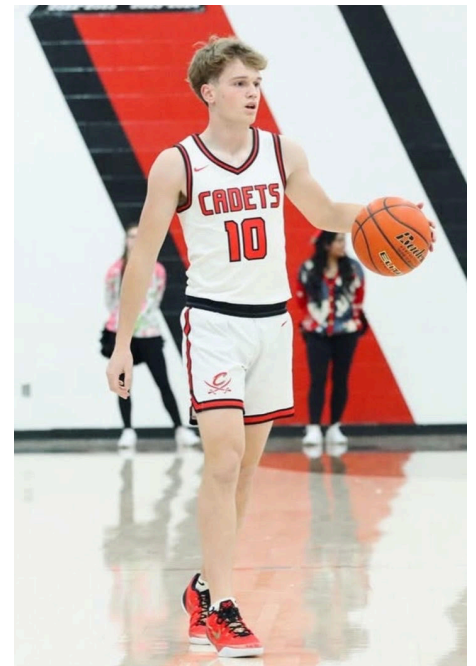
Hunter Swanson, West Point-Beemer Senior, has been having a record-breaking basketball season so far this year. He is top three in stats for just about every category there is.

“We are 9-4, trending in the right direction, I am excited

for the rest of the season,” states Swanson.

The Cadets continue to stride to victory as. Recently they have improved their record to 11-4. This puts them to be ranked number 67th in Nebraska according to Maxpreps.

Hunter Swanson is currently averaging 15 points, 4.7 rebounds, 5.7 rebounds, and 1.8 steals per game, and does this with a field goal percentage of 50% from the field and 33% from three.



“I think my greatest strength is my playmaking, I can get my teammates involved a lot, and get them open looks,” stated Swanson.

When he is not actively scoring, Swanson handles the

The Cadet Courier

19th January 2026

ball and creates open shots for his teammates.

When asked what Swanson's favorite part of basketball is, he responded, "Just being with my friends everyday, being with them, I look forward to it."

Although winning and leading his team to a great team record is important to him, being able to complete this with his buddies is what keeps him practicing and also winning games.

The most difficult part of basketball in general for Swanson would be the sport itself as it puts a lot of stress into the body. Being able to find time to rest is tough when playing so many games.

The season is looking great for the Cadets. Swanson has goals to win Conference and get a home seed for Districts. He looks forward to what's to come. The ultimate goal for Swanson is to make it to state basketball.

"I've been talking with coaches, but I don't think I will accept those offers. I will probably be done after this season," stated Hunter Swanson.

Swanson does not plan to play basketball in college or professionally for a team. Although he has talent for the

sport, it puts a lot of pressure into his body.

Overall Hunter Swanson is having a phenomenal season keeping up top three averages in almost every statline. The Cadets are keeping a good record, have plans to place high in conference, and make a run for districts!

Future Focused

Mr. Carter Ossian brings Future Problem Solvers to Middle Schoolers

By Ethan Corrales

Nearing the time for State Future Problem Solvers, the middle school and high school teams have both been working hard to prepare for the qualifying prompt. If the practice problem was a state qualifying prompt, the middle school competitors would have qualified 3 teams for state.

"It's definitely rewarding, considering that this

is the first year that we've really started future problem solvers in middle school with our 7th and 8th grade classes," said head coach Carter Ossian when asked how he felt seeing the potential of his team.

Ossian stated in an interview that to prepare the students participating in FPS for the state prompt, he was increasingly concerned with teaching the participants the overall structure to progress through. He stated that this act was the polar opposite of his previous training structure, as his previous training regimen was more centered around building background knowledge regarding the specific questions.

"I feel that if I have a problem that stems from something specific, I can figure out the source and then discover the solution for it," said 8th grader Ryker Toelle



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The Cadet Courier

19th January 2026

when asked how he sees himself implementing the skills he's gained from FPS.

In addition, Ryker also stated that one of the most challenging aspects of FPS is working on a time crunch to make their answers understandable. He also stated that he realizes that this area is one he needs improvement on.

When asked how he sees the year ending, Ossian stated, "I want to stay hopeful, and think that we will continue to compete at the same level as we have through our practice problems, and qualify a few teams for state competition, because that's what we've done consistently."

In addition, Ossian also stated that he does not want to inflate the expectations and pride of his participants. He continues to remind them of the drastic difference in format for the state problems as opposed to the practice problems he is giving them. Many of the students have also stated that, in order to prepare for less time allowed for the problem, Ossian has given them practice problems where he has restricted the time allowed to work.

"I feel that it was pretty cool to see them succeed and knowing that they did well on it," Ryker stated when asked

how it felt to see his peers showing promise.

All in all, the FPS teams have shown promise for qualifying for state and have been working hard to ensure that they do qualify. With help from their coach, they are practicing to ensure that they adapt properly to the restrictions of the state problems and work on areas where they themselves have difficulty.

A Classless System

A critique of the class system for public schools around Nebraska.

By Zaq Leslie

As a high school student and athlete, it's common to view our educational experiences through the lens of the subject matter; math, science, history, and yes, sports. However, there's a significant aspect of how we engage with these activities that often goes unnoticed: the way our extracurricular classes are determined. Currently, our class is determined by the amount of students in grades 9th through 11th. While on the surface, this may seem like a reasonable approach, I strongly believe that we need to rethink this system.

As a multi-sport athlete, the class system directly impacts my experience both on and off the field. Competing against schools with much larger student bodies can put our team at a disadvantage, as they may have a deeper pool of talent and resources. This sometimes makes it harder for us to succeed, regardless of our dedication or skill. The way classes are assigned doesn't always reflect the true competitive balance, and as an athlete, I feel the effects of this system in every season.

To foster a more equitable environment for student-athletes during competitions, a proposed adjustment to the class system involves a comprehensive overhaul that includes assessments of various key factors essential to athletic success. These factors, such as team size, the quality of coaching staff, and the availability of athletic funding, are pivotal alongside student enrollment figures in determining the overall competitiveness of a school's sports program. By incorporating these additional criteria into the evaluation process, schools can strive towards creating a more level playing field where athletic

The Cadet Courier

19th January 2026



success is not solely dependent on enrollment numbers.

Introducing a flexible class assignment structure that is subject to annual review offers schools the opportunity to adapt and evolve in response to their recent performance levels and any dynamic changes in their athletic programs. This adaptive approach ensures that schools can be repositioned within the class system based on their current standing and enables a more accurate reflection of their athletic capabilities. As a result, schools can be appropriately moved up or down classes to better align with their competitive peers, fostering an environment where teams are more evenly

matched and promoting fairer and more competitive sporting events for student-athletes.

The implementation of these proposed changes is not only aimed at leveling the playing field for student-athletes but also at enhancing the overall sports experience for participants across all schools.

It's really important to understand why changing this system is a big deal. Sports aren't just about being fit; they also help with our emotions and social skills. When you play sports, you learn valuable life lessons like how to work as a team, bounce back from setbacks, and even lead others. But if students who really love a

sport are randomly placed in teams or positions, it can totally crush their spirit and make them less interested in both the sport and school. We should aim to create a space that encourages and fires up passion instead of just treating it like a numbers game. We owe it to ourselves and future students to provide a setting that motivates and inspires!

Not for Radio

The concert experience of Not For Radio

By Angeline Berganza

Yearning is a fancy word for saying you're not over it and you're still longing for something that's unattainable. Maria Zardoya, lead singer of the band The Marias, started her own solo project Not For Radio, which explores love, loss and nature, leading to the drop of her album Melt.

The quote that started it all was "What's the point of dating, if it's not finding someone for life." She mentions how when swans find somebody and their partner dies, they become isolated searching for them, even dying from heartbreak. If you were ever in a battle of yearner vs yearner, you would lose to your opponent, Maria Zardoya.

The Cadet Courier

19th January 2026

On January 10th, I attended the Not For Radio tour in Chicago, Illinois. The concert was set up beautifully as she did 3 separate acts. The first act was her reenacting as a white swan. She calls the act “Enchanted Fireflies.” The next act was her dressed as a black swan called “Swan in the Night.” And, her last act is called “The Underworld.” Fans dressed up in the theme of one of the acts.

Maria sang the whole album *Melt* with some unreleased songs. The stage was in charge of representing a winter garden. The concert in total was about 2 hours and 40 minutes. The merch line took about an hour but we did see people posing on the stairs to get cute pictures and showing

their adorable outfits. The openers were violin players and they were sharing their music for an hour.

By 8:20 P.M, Maria Zardoya finally came out and she started singing. This was a different concert compared to your typical concert since it had no backup dancers; it was just her voice and the melody. There were points in the show where she had confetti coming down to make it look like it was snowing. The concert had good vibes and energy. The “Narrator,” the person who is explaining the show, started off by saying, “Thank you for coming to see Not For Radio, we hope you dance, sing, and cry.” Let’s just say everyone who attended the concert took it literally.

Maria Zardoya did an amazing job on casting her emotions and letting the audience know what she is portraying with just her voice and the lyrics. You can feel every hurt or happiness from the songs being portrayed during the songs.

Maria Zardoya did an amazing job with the theme of the concert, making it an enjoyable space for her fans and lastly being able to portray her feelings with just her voice. The concert took place in beautiful auditoriums in order to give an extra beautiful feeling to the concert. The theme of the concert was feeling, beautiful, and the simplicity of a garden. Do you think you’ll be able to win if your opponent was Maria during a yearning competition?

Expensive Dreams

Recognizing the things we take for granted in the everyday United States

By Camila Calderon

I’ve lived in West Point, Nebraska my whole life. Ever since I was three, I’ve lived in the same two-story house that only has one bathroom and no basement while having to share a bedroom with my sister until I was thirteen. I was always surrounded by plain cornfields,



The Cadet Courier

19th January 2026

bellowing cows, and the stench of animal feces, so whenever the cold winters of Nebraska hit, I would always let my mind wander to a warm vacation on the beaches of Mexico with no care in the world.

Suddenly, my silent prayers were answered. Since I had family in Sinaloa, Mexico, we decided to travel to Alcapulco when I was six years old with my grandma, my family, and other family members I had never met before. Having seen movies on TV featuring serenely clear beaches, immaculate streets, and cool breezes blowing through people's hair, I had some pretty high expectations. I dreamed that we would be staying at a modern hotel with stable air conditioning, and I would eat the tastiest food I could get my hands on.

They were all destroyed when I saw the seaweed clouding the dirty shore. Trash tumbled through the sand as the wind carried them away, but said wind didn't help me feel any colder. I was wearing shorts and a shirt, but it still felt as if someone had placed me in a sauna at its highest temperature. I didn't really like going into the ocean at the time because of the way the seaweed felt against my feet, so I was left to sit on the hot sand that

burned my skin if I sat still for too long.

Unfortunately, water doesn't really work as well as it does in the United States which is quite ironic considering we were surrounded by the ocean. Whenever I had to take a shower, my mother would have to drench me in cold, freezing water that came from a small bucket that needed to be filled every now and then. Even though it helped with the heat that awaited me outside, it was still unbearable considering it lasted for a stretched period of time. Coincidentally, when my mother went to go fill the bucket, I was alone in the shower when a cockroach crawled towards me, forcing me to let out a bloodcurdling scream. It was when I started crying right then and there that I realized, for once in my life, I had actually begun to miss my home in Nebraska.

The food was the only thing that exceeded my currently low expectations. The meals I had were something I had never tasted before, even though I had eaten my dad's amazing cooking. I had just woken up from a screaming chicken interrupting my hot, sleepless slumber, and we went to a small cafe that served one of the greatest pancakes I had ever devoured. It was the only

great thing about the vacation other than, of course, seeing my grandmother.

When I came back home, I had never kissed the dirty sidewalk of my home harder. I was suddenly grateful for the white snow and the sound of cows rather than screaming chickens every morning. I was grateful for the working, cockroach-free showers, and I was grateful for the cold mornings. All of a sudden, I saw the world I constantly lived in and hated with a burning passion, as something greater.

Even after all this, I still want to live in Mexico. Now, you may be wondering why I would do such a thing after explaining how it demolished my expectations, and I also wonder the same thing. Don't get me wrong, everything I said was very much true, but I still don't like living in Nebraska; also, all of Mexico isn't the way I described it to be. I traveled to Quintana Roo, Mexico last summer, and it was exactly what I dreamed of, even more. But with every vacation I experience, good or bad, I'll never forget that even though not every dream can be achieved, there will still be a greater outcome one way or another.