Pawnee City Public School

February-March 2026 Newsletter

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From the Office of the Superintendent, Mr. Todd Evans

A Simple and Powerful Investment

Yes, 529 college savings plans are valuable tools for securing your child's educational future. But there's an even more powerful investment you should make first—one that costs nothing and pays dividends every single day.

That investment is simple: reading aloud to your child.

What Your Child Gains from Just 15 Minutes a Day

Research from the University of Rochester's Warner School of Education highlights four critical ways reading aloud creates lasting impact:

Language and listening skills.
Cognitive growth.
Social and emotional development.
Academic advantages.

You Are Your Child's First Teacher

Here's a truth worth remembering: parents are a child's first—and most important—teacher. The influence you have in the early years is significant.

When should you start? It's never too early. Even newborns benefit from hearing your voice and the pattern of language.

What if money is tight? Pawnee City is fortunate to have an outstanding library available to all families. Reading to your child doesn't require buying books or enrolling in expensive programs—just your time and attention.

The Alarming Decline

Recent coverage in magazines like Time and Newsweek emphasize a concerning trend: many families today spend less time reading aloud to children than in past decades, and frequent read-aloud routines have become less common.

The numbers are concerning. According to HarperCollins UK, only 41% of children ages 0–4 are read to frequently, down sharply from 64% in 2012. The gap is even wider for boys—just 29% of boys ages 0–2 are read to daily, compared to 44% of girls.

The Bottom Line

Before you worry about funding a college education, invest in building a reader. A child who grows up surrounded by books and stories doesn't just gain academic advantages—they develop curiosity, imagination, and a lifelong love of learning that no amount of money can buy.

We believe in high expectations for all. ~ We believe strong, positive relationships are critical for everyone's success. ~ We believe in creating resilient, motivated, and responsible individuals. ~ We believe our choices predict our outcomes. ~ We believe that everyone shares responsibility for the education of our youth. ~ We believe school is a place of belonging that unites all stakeholders.

From the Office of the High School Principal and AD, Mr. Derek Niss

We know that before we can meet or exceed goals with students, we must guarantee regular attendance at school. We are fortunate at PCHS to have many supportive families that ensure that their students are at school every day. Many also utilize PowerSchool to monitor their student's attendance throughout the day - this allows parents to see if students are tardy to classes at any point in the day.

There is a great deal of research that documents the significant negative effect of absenteeism on academic outcomes. Chronic absenteeism has been determined at the state and federal level to include any student who is not present in their classroom(s) for 10% or more of school days. The 10% marker was chosen because that marks the first steep decline in student performance associated with absences. Nationwide, data on chronic absenteeism shows that prior to 2020, the level of students that were chronically absent peaked at about 15%. Since then, it peaked at 31% in 2021-22 and has seen a slight annual reduction since then. By the time a student reaches the 6th grade, chronic absences become a leading indicator that a student will withdraw, or drop out, of high school. On the flip side, regular attendance at school has shown to have a direct and significant impact on students' reading and math scores, specifically.

It takes all of us (student, family, and school) working together to achieve regular attendance for ALL students. This point in the year can be a long stretch for many students. Please help ensure that your child is at school EVERY day and minimize unnecessary absences. If you have questions or concerns about your student's attendance, please contact the high school office.

Respectfully,

Derek Niss
6-12 Principal

From the Guidance Counselor, Mrs. Lisa Blecha

Scholarships

It's that time of year that I start to get notices of more and more scholarships! As soon as I get word of a scholarship, I give the information to the seniors. Students and parents can also visit the scholarships link on school website → menu → departments → counselor or at: https://www.pawneecityschool.com/page/counselor

If you, your organization, or your business are interested in honoring graduating seniors with a scholarship, please contact me. Also, if you have awarded a scholarship to a graduate, please let me know so I can announce it at graduation. We would like to give not only the recipient but also the provider recognition for his/her generosity and support of young adults.

Class Schedule 2026-2027

Development of the 2026-2027 class schedule is under way! When the schedule becomes finalized. I will be meeting with students individually to choose their classes for the next school year. We will discuss their goals, classes they are interested in, and their progress toward graduation.

Community Service Hours

Please do not forget about community service projects! Projects must be pre-approved through myself or Mr. Niss. If your student has a project in mind, please have them come visit with me or Mr. Niss to get their project approved. The guidelines for community service projects are stated below and also in the school handbook.

Twenty hours of community service are required for graduation from Pawnee City High School. Students may complete these hours at any time while enrolled in grades 9-12 and must be completed prior to students' last day as a senior. Community service projects must be pre-approved by the guidance counselor or principal. Students must submit a completed Community Service Form within 30 days of completing their project. A list of community service resources is also located on the school website under the counselor tab. Forms are located on the school website or in the guidance counselor's office. Community service projects must meet the following criteria for approval.

- No financial compensation may be received by the student.
- Community service hours may not be completed for a relative.
- Community service hours may not be logged during hours in which school is in session.
- Students may receive up to half of their hours for a school affiliated group/organization.
- Community service projects may be completed for any organization in Burchard, DuBois, Pawnee City, Steinauer, Table Rock, and surrounding areas.

Dual Credit Informational Night

Sophomore parents, please mark your calendar for Tuesday, March 17 at 6:00 p.m. We will be having a dual credit informational night about opportunities to take dual credit classes through Southeast Community College. Please be watching your email, mail, and the school social media accounts for more information!

Guidance, Cont.

College and Career Visits

We have several college and career visits planned for the spring semester! Visits are planned to:

- January 21 - Concordia and Wesleyan
- February 17 - 8th Grade to UNO & LOVB Nebraska
- March 31 - 8th Grade to SCC Lincoln & UNL Engineering
- April 22 - Future Educator Day at PSC

From the Office:

Writing Checks

When writing checks to the school for items such as preschool tuition, lunch accounts, computer fees, and/or class/activity dues, ***please*** make out ***separate checks***. These each go into different accounts. ***Thanks in advance for your help!***

Census: We Need Your Help!

Nebraska Law requires that the Board of Education take an annual census. If you have recently moved to our area and have a child between the ages of 0-18 or have recently (within the last 18 months) given birth to a child, please help us update our records by calling the school at 402-852-2988 or 402-852-2411.

Thanks again for your help!

Regular School Hours

School will begin at 8:05 a.m. for all students in grades PreK through 12, and classes will end at 3:40 p.m. every day (with the exception of early outs, late starts, etc.).



Congratulations to the Middle School and High School students who earned a spot on either Honor Roll or Honorable Mention for First Semester!!

Keep up the good work!

Honor Roll

GPA 94-100%

Abby Dietrich 12
Cael Johnson 12
Shayla Puhalla 12
Kinsley Benson 11
Taelyn Blecha 11
Emalyse Gottula 11
Kailey Hartman 11
Haylee Riesland 11
Adelyn Sisco 11
Sage Fisher 10
Gage Johannes 10
Liam Glathar 9
Maverick Glathar 9
Ainsley Rauner 9
Cade Johnson 8
Lane Johnson 8
Landon Moore 8
Aubrey Sisco 8
Amelia Strathman 8
Sophia Sunneberg 8
Jase Brumbaugh 7
Diederik de Koning 7
Vanessa Gottula 7
Alana Gyhra 7
Joey Johnson 7
Mercy McLaughlin 7
Megan Portrey 7
Jace Rauner 7
Riley Strehle 7
Case Gyhra 6
Madison Hegemann 6
Timothy Hoffman 6
Lisa Holthus 6
Abigail Johnson 6
Rhett Johnson 6
Aubree Marr 6
Sicilia Sunneberg 6
Abigail Wempe 6
Ella Wernimont 6

Honorable Mention

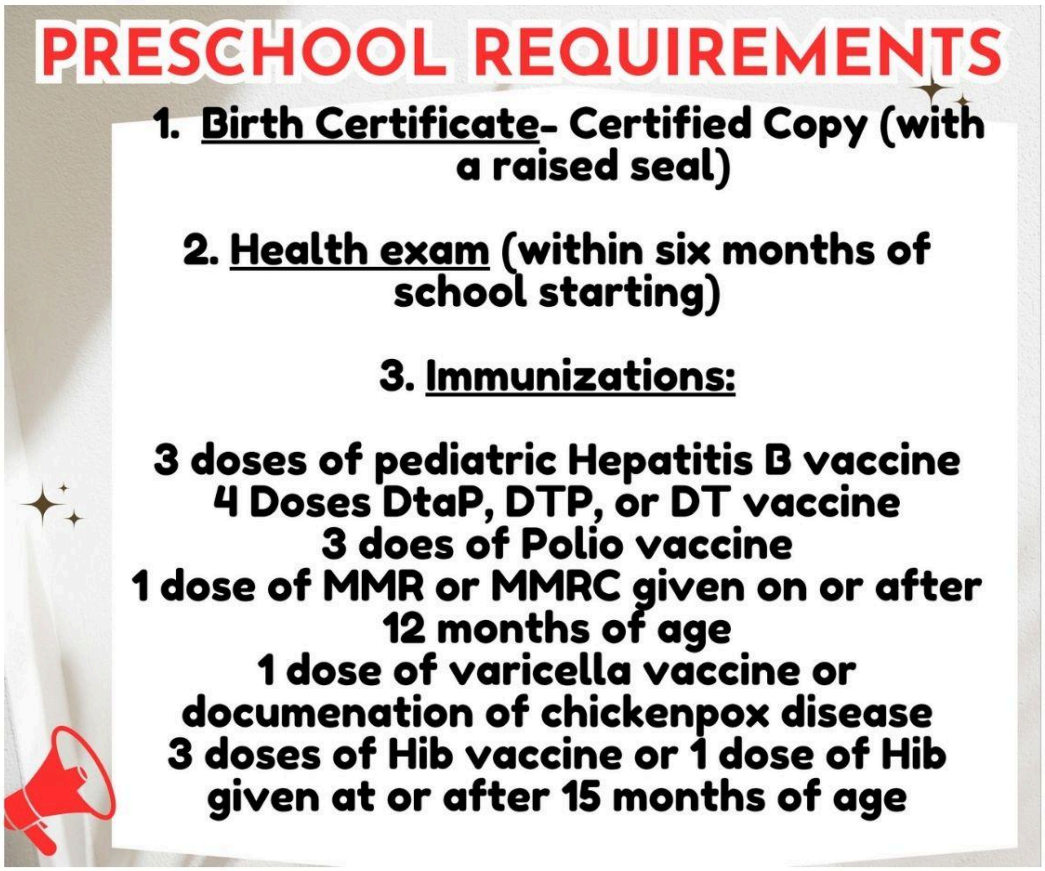
GPA 90-93.9%

Norman McHenry 12
Madelyn Osborne 12
Larkyn Vlcek 12
Denielle Gyhra 11
Jaydon Johnson 11
Dylan Layne 11
Alecia Hensel 10
Addison Petersen 10
Haylee Plager 10
Ashlyn Puhalla 10
Gauge Schuetz 10
Jordan Wernimont 10
Kailyn Jensen 9
Emily Koster 9
Ava Schlund 8
Emma Turnbull 8
Kohen Vetrovsky 8
Arianna Baum 7
Leena Bouthavong 7
Carter Boverhuis 7
Cole Cumley 7
Piper Eubanks 7
Camryn Fetherkile 7
Jovani Mena-Hendrickson 7
Autumn Spier 7
Waylon Strathman 7
Braxtyn Theasmeyer 7
Aaliyah Andersen 6
Elijah Frakes 6
Avery Lewis 6
Summer McAlevy 6
Layne Plager 6
Halli Yunghans 6

Preschool 2026-2027 Registration:

Preschool registration for the 2026-2027 school year will open February 1, 2026 and will close on April 15, 2026. Preschool is defined as a child who will be four years of age on or before July 31, 2026. If your child is four years old, you will be receiving a letter in the mail if you filled out the census. If you did not, please contact the office at (402)-852-2411. The Nebraska Department of Education stipulates that a preschool classroom can have only 20 students. Enrollment is limited in the 2026-2027 school year. Applying does not guarantee enrollment. Your child will need to be fully toilet trained before entering the program.

If you have any questions, please contact Miss Coffey at (402)-852-2411 or email at mcoffey@pawneecityschool.net.



Preschool News from Ms. Coffey

Hello from preschool! The preschoolers are hard at work. They are learning: letters, numbers, letter sounds, building peer relationships, learning how to share, and social emotional skills. So far, we have learned about 50% of our letters and numbers. Recently, the class split into teams and had a competion. It was the "Huskers vs. The PC Indians". The Huskers won! We will continue to learn! Here are some pictures from our classroom!





Also, the preschoolers enjoyed their first snow at PC Elementary. A fun thing at PC Elementary is the students get to get geared up in their snow gear and head out to the snow pile for fun. Fun was had by all!



The preschoolers experiment, Pumpkin Jack, is growing away. Right now, there isn't much to see but there is a very small plant growing in the bottom. We will continue to monitor it with the extension office and hopefully will have some seedlings soon!



-Miss Coffey

Kindergarten with Mrs. Lang



CLASSROOM HIGHLIGHTS

Happy New Year! 🎉 We were so excited to welcome our kindergarteners back and jump into a brand-new year of learning, growing, and having fun! It's hard to believe our friends are already halfway to first grade. Time sure flies when you're having fun! Our twenty-two superstars continue to amaze me every day with their curiosity, big smiles, and willingness to try new things. We can't wait to see all the wonderful learning ahead!

Mrs. Lang

HERE'S WHAT WE ARE LEARNING!

- Addition and Subtraction
- Addition patterns
- Continue blending and segmenting words
- Subjective Pronouns
- Different types of weather
- Reading Genres
- Volume
- Comparing numbers
- Writing simple sentences









First Grade News

Mrs. Candy Sejkora

First graders have had a great year! They have matured, grown, and learned so much this year. I couldn't be more proud of them! We still have a few months left to fill up our brain. They are so excited to see what all they can still learn before they become 2nd graders.

They have learned more than just reading, writing, and arithmetic. They have learned to problem solve, become responsible, and they have learned how to handle adversity.

We are all looking forward to warm weather. Even though it hasn't been a very harsh winter, spring is still a refreshing season. We can look back on all we have learned, yet look forward to what is in store as we are getting close to the end of the year. Enjoy every day with your child as time goes fast!

Noteworthy News

Mrs. Laura Dieckgrafe

Brrrrr, winter has arrived! Here in the music department we have hunkered down to stay warm and prepare for our spring contests and concerts!

The following 4th-6th graders were scheduled to perform at Sing Around Nebraska in Fremont on January 24th. Unfortunately, we were not able to attend due to the weather that day. However please congratulate Alora Spier, Spencer Kosiski, Paislee Farwell, Silas Bloss, Layla Cumley, Halli Yunghans, Aaliyah Andersen, Madison Hegemann, and Aubree Marr for being selected!

Freshmen Bella Seitz and Addison Boverhuis performed at Singing Youth of Nebraska in Hastings on January 31 with other 7th-9th grade singers across the state. Wonderful performance!

Students in grades 4-7 are excited for the Orpheum trip again this year. This spring they will see Mrs. Doubtfire in May. Students attending will receive details about transportation and leave time as we get closer to the show.

Please see our spring concert and contest schedule below. We are looking forward to giving another spring concert at South Park! As always, please watch Rooms for communication about the choirs and details about their performances.

March 3: Freshmore @ JCC (all freshmen and sophomores in choir)
March 19: HTRS JH Music Contest, Grades 6-7 Band & Choir, select 8th graders
March 30: MUDECAS Music @ Johnson-Brock, 8-12 Band and Choir
April 20: District Music Contest @ JCC, 8-12 Band and Choir
April 30: Spring Music Concert, 6:00 PM, 5-12 Band and 6-12 Choir @ South Park (gym rain location)
May 7: Elementary Spring Concert, 7:00 PM, K-5 (NO 5th grade band)

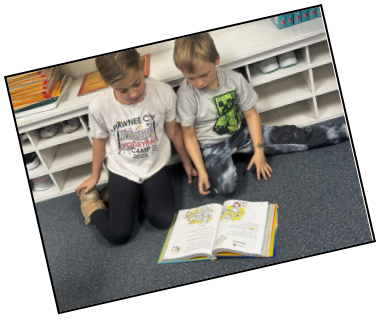
Second Grade

Second grade welcomes Ms. Branek!

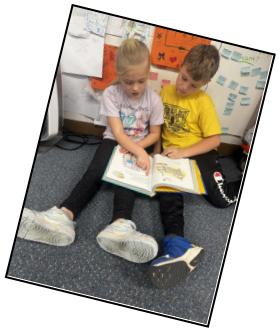
"I am so excited to be doing my student teaching with such an amazing class! I will be graduating from UNO in May, and I am so excited to be gaining experience with your kiddos! Learning and growing alongside this amazing school community has me so excited to become a teacher of my own classroom!" - Ms. Branek



We are wordsmiths! The second graders are writing about various topics including events that change the earth (volcanos, tsunamis, earthquakes), dabbling with free verse poetry, and learning and using new vocabulary words such as *dainty*, *properties*, and *prevail* in sentences. We are focusing on using capital letters, the correct punctuation, spaces between words, and adding more detail to our sentences!



Our reading focus is currently on becoming fluent readers. We have been talking about reading each word, changing expressions based on what is happening in the story, and how and why quotation marks are implemented in stories. We are learning to use context clues and how prefixes and suffixes change the meaning of words. In addition, we are focusing on retelling stories to include characters, setting, problem, and solution.



We have been building a strong foundation of place value understanding through a concrete to pictorial to abstract approach in math. Students bundled groups of 10 and saw that 10 like units can be bundled to produce a new unit that is ten times as large. This progressed from seeing 10 ones as 1 ten to understanding 10 tens as 1 hundred. Our next module in Eureka Math builds on that place value understanding, and students will compose and decompose place value units to add and subtract within 200. We will work on building fluency in two-digit addition and subtraction within 100 and continue to use various strategies to solve one- and two-step word problems. Students are encouraged to use different strategies to solve number sentences including number bonds, tape diagrams, place value disk drawings, and something new, arrow notation.

Keep up the hard work second graders! You are amazing!

Mrs. Koster

Hello From 3rd Grade!

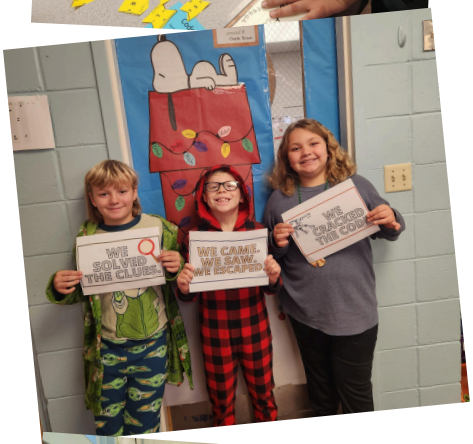


December was a month of learning and celebrating growth. We had a classroom MAPS Award Red Carpet Celebration, completed a math breakout room to save Frosty, and participated in dress up days.

Break was restful, which was needed as January has brought with it a flurry of excitement! And soon February will be here.

Learning has included:

- ★ Multiplication and division facts. Singing along to favorite nursery rhymes makes memorization cheerful!
- ★ Learning to write in sequential order
- ★ Researching a US President and preparing a presentation
- ★ Studying genetics with hands on activities
- ★ Continuing to read various genres and topics for Reading class
- ★ Upcoming topics and events include Martin Luther King Jr., the 100th Day of School, & Valentine's Day festivities!

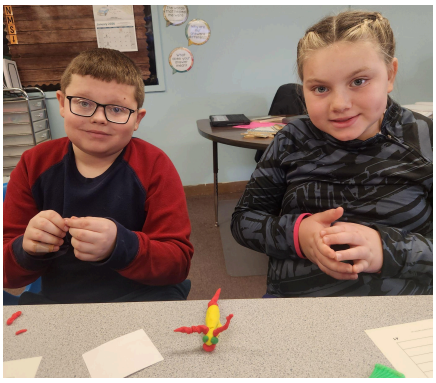


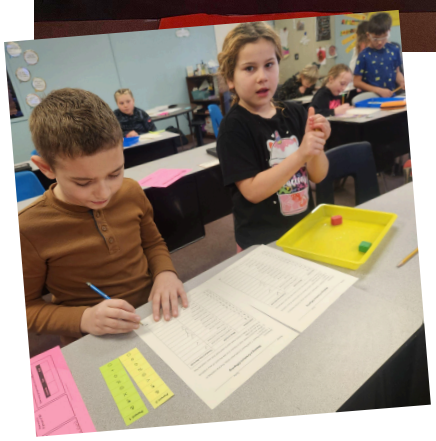


Until Next Time!
Mrs. Hoffman











Fourth Grade News

By Miss Gyhra

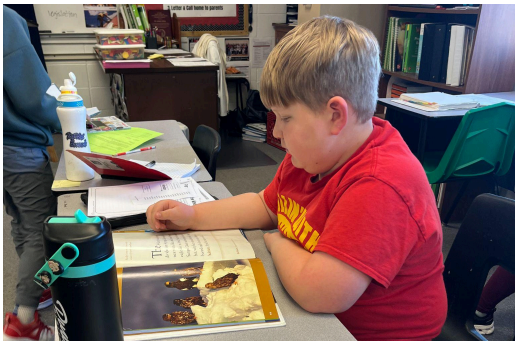
We are ready to take the spring semester by storm! With spring comes Nebraska History. We will learn all about the state including its geography, our government, and the vast history of the beginnings of our state to today. We have some unique celebrations including celebrating Nebraska's birthday and visiting the capitol.

As we look into the second half of the year, we need to be making big strides towards fifth grade readiness. Here are the main things to consider:

- Mastering our multiplication and division math facts
- Writing complete sentences efficiently and that effectively share an idea
- Reading at 133 words per minute with 8 or less errors at the end of spring

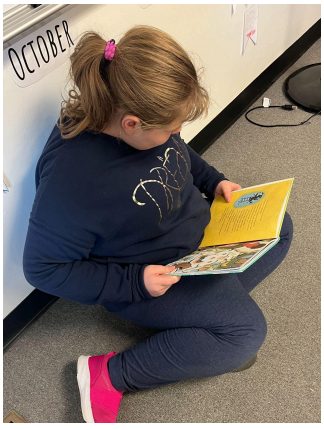
These may just seem like benchmark numbers that someone came up with but they have significant meaning behind them. These all target fluency in a specific area. Fluency takes the strain away when trying to learn new concepts as they get older. If they are focusing less on being able to do the task, they can get more knowledge out of the task.

I would suggest for you to continue encouraging independent reading, reading with a sibling or parent, flashcards, and letting your student write down things relevant to your household such as your weekend schedule or grocery lists.

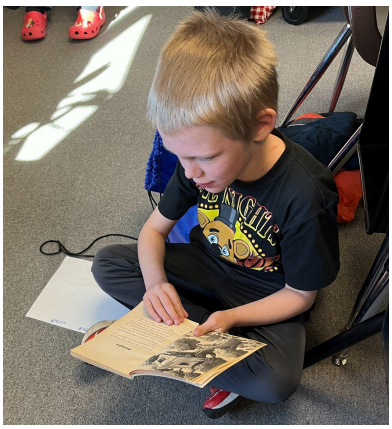




Speaking of independent reading, here are some pictures of this taking place at school!







Mrs. Julie Pierce

First Lego League Update



The Unearthed Season is well underway. FLL participants are working on how to solve a problem faced by archaeologists. Students have been researching issues archaeologists manage. The main issue the group is focusing on is environmental hazards, specifically strong wind. The Historical Hooligans solution for strong wind is an auto lockdown system for archaeologists to use for equipment or tools. Students have designed a model of a container that will sense strong wind with the use of an anemometer to initiate motors that will shut the container. Team members are looking for people to share their project with and get feedback from to improve on their design.



Team members improved on a robot design for the competition bot. Their bot's name is Spike. Spike has a copy to make coding and testing more efficient. So far the team can make 190 points on a perfect run.

The Historical Hooligans will compete in March at the state FLL competition in Lincoln. Stay tuned for further details.

Upcoming Testing

Spring testing is coming. District testing will be in April. Pawnee City students K-2 and 9th grade will be taking the spring MAP tests. Grades 3-8 will be taking the NSCAS state test. Sophomores will be taking the Pre-ACT and the Juniors will be taking the ACT. The tests are adaptive outside of a grade level and measure student growth. These tests will help guide district and class decision making.

If you have a child taking a test, you can assist by doing the following two actions.

1. **Offer Positive Reinforcement**
   Encouragement can go a long way. Talk to your child about test taking in helping students come to testing days feeling confident. Praise your child for the effort to prepare for testing. Share in the excitement in succeeding with a new concept or skill. Encourage progress being made on continuing skills.
2. **Support healthy habits**
   Sleep and nutrition can have a huge impact on a child's ability to focus and retain information. Nutritious meals and a regular sleep schedule will help a child succeed in the classroom. On testing days, it's especially important to make sure that your child gets a good night's sleep, has a nutritious breakfast, and is hydrated.

Mrs. Laura Bloss - High School English and Speech

High school English classes are chugging along as always.

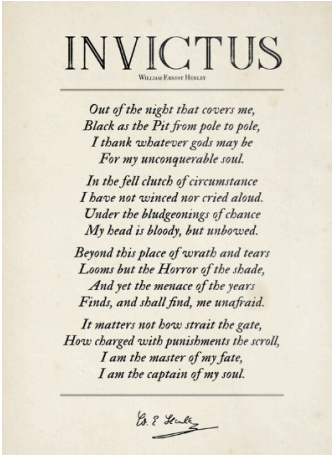
Speech just gave their first speech—the bag speech. Imagine describing five personality traits with objects from your house that fit into one bag. What would you bring? Well, we saw sports gear and trophies, pictures of loved ones, and pet paraphernalia.

The freshmen are halfway through *Hamlet*. We read it in a side-by-side text that shows both the original Elizabethan lines and their modern translations. Don't worry--nothing is *rotten* with that. We also watch scenes from several different movie adaptations of the famous play after reading each act to compare different interpretations of the characters. We even check out a modern version set in NYC and an all-female version. Additionally, if you haven't seen *Renaissance Man* starring Danny DeVito, who teaches *Hamlet* to a group of soldiers, then we suggest you go rent it soon.



The sophomores are also halfway through a famous Shakespeare text—*Julius Caesar.* And they also tackle it through side-by-side texts and watch several different movie adaptations as they progress. Not only does the play work well in a female prison and with *Family Guy*, but it's easy to compare ancient persuasive speaking and politics to our modern world. For example, go watch *Mean Girls* and imagine Regina George as Julius Caesar, and you'll see exactly what we mean. Couple these movies with some amazing illustrations on the board, and the sophomores are basically inside the Roman senate for an hour each day. No fault in our stars, here.

The juniors are reading The Great Gatsby and discussing what the American Dream means to different characters. The novel is an American classic rich with symbolism of colors, money, hope, and despair. After this, they'll review how to write an essay for the ACT test–it's a little different than just a basic persuasive essay. And then they'll be on to contrasting those Roaring 20s with the 1930s through The Grapes of Wrath.



And, finally, the seniors just wrapped up *Gulliver's Travels.* Imagine a satirical travelogue used for some self-examination of a country's faults. Seems silly, but it packed a punch at the time--just like his *Modest Proposal.* Up next for these kids is some more satire to examine the world they'll soon be navigating on their own with some *1984, Fahrenheit 451,* and Ayn Rand's *Anthem*. This last novella especially looks at the importance of individuality and what could happen if we lose it, alongside a poem called *Invictus.* A quick read of it here will be a poetry pep talk for your day you didn't know you wanted. You're welcome!

SPEECH TEAM:
The speech team is hard at work getting pieces ready for the competition season. The NSAA offers 10 events for students: Informative, Persuasive, Extemporaneous, Entertainment, Poetry Interpretation, Humorous Interpretation, Dramatic Interpretation, Program Oral Interpretation, Duet Acting, and Oral Interpretation of Drama. Our first meet is MUDECAS on Jan 31st, and the team will compete most Saturdays through the end of March.

There are approximately 18 students on the speech team. Watch the school calendar and Facebook page for updates about our home meet, schedule, and public performance afternoon at Old Guys Brew. We'd love to show off what these kids can do! Students are working before school, after sports, and during free periods. Speech kids are some hard-working kids here at PC!

From Mr. Tim Kluck

The Economics class began their stock market project earlier this month. Students began with $100,000 and have four options for how to spend it: leave it in a savings account, purchase CDs, purchase bonds, or purchase stocks. Students have been learning about the risks, rewards, advantages, and disadvantages of each. With only two weeks under our belt and the market a little unsteady, here is our current leaderboard. Costco has been good to Tyler so far.

1	**Tyler Tegtmeier**	$102,338.03	**2.34%**
2	**Abby Dietrich**	$100,366.32	**0.37%**
3	**Morgann Friedly**	$99,966.57	**-0.03%**
4	**Dawson Wilkinson**	$99,918.35	**-0.08%**
5	**Quinn Friedly**	$99,828.65	**-0.17%**

Trap Shooting from Mary Moser

Here is the trap team shooting schedule for 2026

March 14 - Beatrice Gun Club
March 21 - Otoe County Wildlife Club - Nebraska City
March 28 - Crete Ikes Tuxedo Park, Crete
April 4 - Beatrice Gun Club
April 11 - Otoe County Wildlife Club - Nebraska City
April 18 - Crete Ikes
April 25 - Gayle Hanshaw All Conference Shoot
April 30, May 1 & 2 - Cornhusker Invite Doniphan NE

Band Notes

By Andrea Veleba



On January 26, 16 Pawnee City students attended the Pioneer Conference Band Clinic in Friend. EMF was the host school for the event, and all 11 schools in the conference attended. This clinic was run differently than in the recent past. We had THREE different student groups perform on the concert: the Wind Ensemble conducted by Mr. Royce Schweitzer, and the Symphonic Band and Percussion Ensemble conducted by conference directors. We wanted ALL of our high school band members to participate in this event, and it turned out well!

Band members are working hard to prepare for concerts and contests, and I'm looking ahead to all of the upcoming performances!! Students in 6-7 grade choir, 6-7 grade band, 5th grade band, and select students in 6-8 grade band who want to take solos or small groups will perform at the HTRS Middle School Contest on **Thursday, March 19**. Pawnee City will be attending the MUDECAS Music Contest this year on **Monday, March 30** at Johnson-Brock; this contest will include band and choir members in grades 8-12. Finally, students in grades 8-12 will compete at the District Music Contest, hosted by Johnson County Central on **Monday, April 20**.

Spring Concerts have been scheduled as follows:

- We are combining the 5th grade band, 6-7th band and choir, and the 8-12 band and choir for our **Spring "Concert in the Park."** This will start at 6:00 p.m. on **Thurs., April 30** and will take place on the stage at the amphitheater at **VanHorne Park**. Bring your lawn chairs or blankets, and enjoy the outdoor performances. *(In case of inclement weather, the concert will be held in the high school gym. Notification will be made early that day if the change needs to be made.)*
- The **Elementary Music Concert** for grades K-5 is scheduled for **Thurs., May 7** at 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium. Recorders will play on this concert, but the band will have already performed and won't be playing again.

Please keep in mind that events and times are subject to change. Any changes to the information listed above will be communicated in the weekly and/or daily bulletins.

As always, I want to thank those of you who support the Fine Arts in Pawnee City, and a HUGE "Thank you!!" to the Fine Arts Booster organization. We really do appreciate everything that you do for us!!

<u>From the Yearbook Staff</u>

Please see page 21 for an order form for the 2026 Middle School/High School Yearbook. The deadline for ordering is **Friday, March 6**. Payments of cash or check can be turned in with the form, and online payments can also be made. ***If ordering online, you'll still need to fill out a form.*** Contact Mrs. Veleba at the school if you have any questions. 402-852-2988

Mrs. Dedra Blecha - From: PTI Nebraska Newsletter

Helping Students with Disabilities Plan for Life After High School

The IRIS Center's transition planning module offers parents and professionals easy-to-use tools to support students with disabilities as they prepare for life after high school, including college, careers, and independent living. It explains the most important parts of transition planning, how to build self-determination skills, and ways families, schools, and community partners can work together. With this guidance, adults can help students discover their strengths and interests, set meaningful goals, and take confident steps toward their future—empowering them to grow, build independence, and pursue their personal dreams, even when challenges arise.

What the Module Teaches

--What Secondary Transition Is and Why It Matters
It explains secondary transition planning – a process that helps students with disabilities prepare for life after high school (e.g., college, vocational training, employment, independent living skills, community living). Parents and educators learn why planning ahead is essential for students to achieve meaningful adult goals.

--The Unique Challenges Students with Disabilities Face
It describes the specific challenges that students with disabilities may experience as they prepare for life after high school. It helps parents and other adults better understand their child's strengths, and supports, so they can offer guidance that is thoughtful, realistic, and encouraging.

--How to Support Self-Determination
It shows parents and educators how to promote self-determination, which helps students speak up for themselves, make choices, and take an active role in planning their future. These skills build confidence, independence, and a sense of ownership as students work toward their goals.

--The Key Components of Transition Planning
Parents and educators learn what good transition planning includes, such as:

- Student-focused planning based on interests, preferences, strengths, and needs
- Development of measurable goals
- A coordinated and tailored plan that addresses meaningful outcomes for the student, leading to a smoother and more intentional transition to post-high school life
- Collaboration with schools, families, and adult service agencies
- Preparing for education/training, work, and independent living

We have highlighted this resource because it helps parents, educators, and other professionals understand what transition planning is, why it matters, what it should include, and how to do it well. With this information, adults can better support students with disabilities in preparing for life after high school, including further education, employment, and independent living.

IRIS resources are developed from research and backed by educational standards, which means both parents and professionals are learning trusted, effective practices rather than opinions.

To access this Transition-based module, go to:
https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/tran/cresource/#content

2026 Pawnee City Track & Field Season

Coach Aeden Gyhra

There are many changes to the Pawnee City Track & Field team for the upcoming season, but we have a strong tradition and legacy to build on! I would be the first to say how unusual it will be without Coach Strong and Coach Ferebee at the helm this year. Coach Strong is a fixture to this program, and many alumni can attest to his leadership, work ethic, and passion inspiring their love for the sport. Coach Ferebee possessed the knowledge, strategy, and humor it took to glue together a strong team. Although we are missing their influence, I am encouraged to have such great experienced support from coaches Candy Sejkora, Emily Agena, & Austin Martin. Coach Ben Blecha will also be joining the team this year. He brings a vast knowledge of the sport and was a very successful member of the PCHS track team. Together, we hope to continue the strength of the program and blend in some new ideas that come with new faces.

I am very grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this team, one I loved being a part of as a student at PCHS. Track & Field is mentally and physically challenging, and if harnessed correctly, this brings individual and team success. For those willing to embrace the hard work, it can be extremely fulfilling. I want that for every student who goes out for this sport! There are many events to try and finding your niche is key. We are here to support the students and are excited to see their growth through the season.

If you are considering coming out, take a chance and try it! I am also excited to see familiar faces on the team. This is your year to PR, become a leader, and see success. There is nothing like being a part of the track & field team. See you this spring!

Track and Field Schedule

(NOTE: Dates and times are subject to change)

Thurs., March 19	Doane Invite in Crete (1:00 p.m.)
Wed., March 25	Pioneer Conference Indoor at Doane in Crete (9:30 a.m.)
Thurs., April 2	Thayer Central Invite in Hebron (10:30 a.m.)
Tues., April 7	JCC Invite in Tecumseh (9:30 a.m.)
Tues., April 14	Nemaha Central Invite in Seneca (4:00 p.m.)
Tues., April 21	FCSH Invite in Syracuse (9:30 a.m.)
Sat., April 25	MUDECAS Meet at Tri-County (8:30 a.m.)
Tues., April 28	Pawnee City Invite (10:30 a.m.)
Sat., May 2	Pioneer Conference Meet in Lewiston (9:00 a.m.)
Fri., May 8	Orville Rettig Invite at Nebraska City High School (9:00 a.m.)
Wed., May 13	Districts - Location TBA
Fri., May 22	State at Omaha Burke
Sat., May 23	State at Omaha Burke

HEART HEALTH PRESENTATION

February 6th, 2026 at 12 pm @ your Pawnee City Public Library

Join us for a presentation on heart health by Dr. Pacini from Bryan Heart followed by blood pressure checks for anyone who would like one.

Any questions, please contact the library at 402-852-2118 or email us at plibrary2@gmail.com.



All programs sponsored by the Pawnee City Public Library are FREE.

Henna

-PRESENTATION-

MARCH 31

Pawnee City Public Library

4PM

Henna artist Shaleen will be giving a short presentation on the history of Henna followed by giving Henna tattoos. The first 20 to sign up will receive practice sheets and a henna cone to practice while waiting for their tattoo. Additional attendees will be able to receive tattoo only.



All programs sponsored by Pawnee City Public Library are FREE of charge.





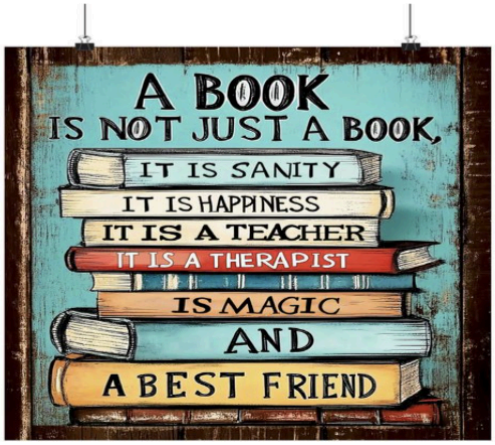
See our Facebook page for upcoming games and activities during February and March at the Pawnee City Public Library

NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK!

"Find Your Joy"

April 19-25, 2026

Watch for activities to be announced.



2025-2026 Yearbook Order Form

The 2026 Yearbook for grades 6-12 is now on sale!

- Please fill out the information below and return forms to the HS office or the band room **no later than March 6, 2026**. Payments can be made online, in cash, or by check (made out to Pawnee City Public School). Cash/check payments should be submitted with order forms.

Name of person ordering (please print): _____

_____ I would like to order a 2026 yearbook for the cost of $45

_____ I want my yearbook **personalized** with the following name (please print):

(please check the option that you want)

_____ Use a label-maker at NO EXTRA COST

OR

_____ I would like the company to stamp it on for an extra $4.50.

Complete the following information only if you are a current Pawnee City SENIOR or an adult ordering a yearbook:

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Thank you for your support!

Sincerely,
The Pawnee City Public School Yearbook Staff

(FOR OFFICE USE ONLY) *DATE* _____ *amount paid* _____ *check #* _____ *cash* _____

Pawnee City Public Schools Education Foundations

Backpack Program Matching Funds Campaign

The Pawnee City Public Schools Education Foundation is excited to unveil a matching funds initiative aimed at bolstering the Pawnee City School Backpack Program. This vital program currently sends home food-filled backpacks every Friday afternoon to support twenty-six families in need.

Designed to assist students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch Programs, this initiative ensures that children and their families have access to nourishing food over the weekend, providing essential support until they return to school. The cost to supply one student with weekly backpacks throughout the school year is approximately $250.

In a show of commitment, the Pawnee City Public Schools Education Foundation has pledged to match donations up to $5,000, directly benefiting the Backpack Program.

We invite you to join us in uplifting this initiative. Contributions can be made to the Pawnee City Public Schools Education Foundation, a recognized 501(c)(3) organization, to help us make a meaningful difference.

Donations can be sent to:
Pawnee City Public Schools Education Foundation
729 E Street - PO Box 393
Pawnee City, NE 68420.

Kindly include Backpack Program in the memo of your check.



Why should my student Join Pawnee County 4-H?

Youth in 4-H are:

- 4 times more likely to give back to their communities
- 2 times more likely to make healthier choices
- 2 times more likely to participate in STEM activities
- 2 times more likely to be civically active



Fill this page full of hearts with Best Choice UPC labels and return it to the school.

Don't forget to put your student's name on the page. They could win a prize!

Student Name:

Grade:



February

(All events and times are subject to change.)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 **NO SCHOOL for students** **Teachers to attend ESU conference** 4PM JH Wr @ Hebron Pioneer Conf BB (J-B, LCC, Ster) and Art Show (J-B)	3 Pioneer Conf BB (J-B, LCC, Ster) and Art Show (J-B)	4 **2PM HOME JH GBB vs HTRS**	5 Pioneer Conf BB (J-B, LCC, Ster) and Art Show (J-B)	6 Pioneer Conf BB (J-B, LCC, Ster) and Art Show (J-B)	7 8AM Speech @ Auburn Pioneer Conf BB (J-B, LCC, Ster) and Art Show (J-B)
8	9 **4PM Pawnee County Spelling Bee in HS auditorium** 6PM School Board Meeting	10 4PM HS BB @ Axtell, KS	11 8AM Speech @ Diller-Odell (Pioneer Conf) **4-7:30PM Parent-Teacher Conferences**	12 **4-7:30PM Parent-Teacher Conferences** 4:30PM HS BB @ JCC	13 District HS Boys Wr @ Shelby-Rising City 12:30 weigh-in 2:00 wrestle	14 **Happy Valentine's Day!** 8AM HS Speech @ Meridian Invite 9AM JH GBB @ FCSH Invite District HS Boys Wr @ Shelby-Rising City 7:30 weigh-in 9:00 wrestle
15	16 **President's Day** 1PM JH GBB @ Diller-Odell HS Girls Sub-District BB	17 8AM UNO College Visit (8th grade) HS Girls Sub-District BB	18	19 **4PM HOME GBB vs Falls City** HS Girls Sub-District BB Boys State Wrestling	20 **5PM HOME HS BBB vs Southern** Boys State Wrestling	21 **8AM Speech @ Pawnee City Invite** Boys State Wrestling
22	23 4PM JH GBB @ JCC in Cook HS Boys Sub-District BB	24 8:30 SCC Milford - Careers in Transportation 4:30PM JH Wr @ Crete HS Boys Sub-District BB	25 11:30AM SCC Accuplacer Testing	26 4PM JH Wr @ Falls City Invite 4PM JH GBB @ FCSH HS Boys Sub-District BB	27 **NO PRESCHOOL** 8AM Speech @ Elkhorn North 10AM JH Wr @ Weeping Water HS Girls District BB	28 9AM Speech @ Plattsmouth HS Boys District BB

March

(All events and times are subject to change.)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 8AM Speech @ Weeping Water 4PM JH GBB @ Johnson-Brock HS Boys Dist BB Start of Spring Practices	3 10AM Freshmore Clinic @ JCC in Tecumseh HS Boys District Final BB	4 HS Girls State BB	5 4:30PM JH Wr @ Auburn HS Girls State BB	6 HS Girls State BB	7 8AM Speech @ Fairbury HS Girls State BB
8 Daylight Savings Time - Move clocks forward 1 hour	9 6PM School Board Meeting	10 4PM JH Wr @ Nebraska City Invite	11 HS Boys State BB	12 **NO SCHOOL Spring Break** HS Boys State BB	13 **NO SCHOOL Spring Break** HS Boys State BB	14 HS Boys State BB
15 2PM Speech - Parents Night @ Old Guy's Brew	16 **NO SCHOOL for students** **Teacher Inservice** 9AM District D1-1 Speech @ Raymond Central	17 **Happy St. Patrick's Day** 6PM Dual Credit Info Night for Soph/ Soph Parents	18 9AM HS Quiz Bowl @ HTRS (Pioneer Conf)	19 9AM HTRS MS Music Contest in Humboldt 1PM HS Track @ Doane Invite in Crete 3PM HS Quiz Bowl @ Peru State College	20	21 CNA Class Lab
22	23 9AM JH Quiz Bowl @ FCSH (Pioneer Conf)	24 4PM B Golf Tri @ Falls City with Auburn	25 9:30AM HS Tr @ Crete State FFA in Lincoln	26 State FFA in Lincoln	27 **NO PRESCHOOL** State FFA in Lincoln	28 State Speech in Kearney
29	30 8AM MUDECAS Music Contest @ Johnson-Brock (Gr 8-12 band/choir) 9:15AM B Golf @ Auburn	31 8:30AM SCC Lincoln Visit (8th grade)	Looking ahead…… April 1	April 2 10:30AM HS Tr @ Thayer Central in Hebron	April 3 **NO SCHOOL EASTER BREAK**	April 4
April 5 EASTER SUNDAY	April 6 **NO SCHOOL for students** **Teacher Inservice**					

2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR

JULY 2025

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AUGUST 2025

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31						

SEPTEMBER 2025

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OCTOBER 2025

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NOVEMBER 2025

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DECEMBER 2025

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Important Dates:

August
- 7, 8, 11 & 12 - Teacher Professional Development
- 11- Start of HS Fall Sports (FB, VB, CC & Girls Golf)
- 12 - Open House Night
- 13 - First Day of School - 2:00 PM Dismissal

September
- 1 - NO SCHOOL - Labor Day
- 15 - NO SCHOOL - Teacher Professional Development
- 24 & 25 - Parent/Teacher Conf. (4:00-7:30 PM)

October
- 13-14 - Girls State Golf
- 16 - End of 1st Quarter
- 17 - NO SCHOOL
- 20 - NO SCHOOL - Teacher Professional Development
- 24 - State Cross Country
- 31 - NO SCHOOL - Teacher Professional Development

November
- 5-8 - State Volleyball
- 17 - Start of HS Winter Sports (BB & Wrestling)
- 21 - D6 State Football
- 26-Dec.1 - NO SCHOOL - Fall Break

December
- 1 - NO SCHOOL - Teacher Professional Development
- 10 - Class C State Play Production
- 11 - Class D State Play Production
- 19 - End of 1st Semester (Full Day)
- 24-28 - NSAA Moratorium

January
- 5 - Teachers Return
- 6 - Students Return (Full Day)
- 19 - NO SCHOOL - Teacher Professional Development

February
- 2 - NO SCHOOL - ESU 4 Engaging Educators Conf.
- 11 & 12 - Parent/Teacher Conferences (4:00-7:30 PM)
- 19-21 - State Wrestling

March
- 2 - Start of HS Spring Sports (Track & Boys Golf)
- 4-7 - State Girls Basketball
- 11 - End of 3rd Quarter
- 12-15 - State Boys Basketball
- 12-16 - NO SCHOOL - Spring Break
- 16 - NO SCHOOL - Teacher Professional Development
- 25-27 - State Speech

April
- 3-6 - NO SCHOOL - Easter Break
- 6 - NO SCHOOL - Teacher Professional Development

May
- 5 - Last Day for Seniors ◇
- 13 - Class D District Track
  (No School if PC Selected as Host Site)
- 13 - Earliest Last Day of School (12:30 PM dismissal)**
- 16 - Graduation (2:00 PM) ⬭
- 21 - Latest Last Day of School (12:30 PM dismissal)**
  Final staff workday will follow last student day.
- 22-23 - State Track
- 27-28 - Boys State Golf

** The Last Day of School will be set at the March 2026 Board meeting to equal up to 185 teacher contract days.

- Full School Day
- NO SCHOOL
- Early Student Dismissal
- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- NO SCHOOL - Teacher Professional Development
- Flex Days for Weather/Emergency Closure
- End of Quarter or Semester

JANUARY 2026

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FEBRUARY 2026

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MARCH 2026

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MAY 2026

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JUNE 2026

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Pawnee City Public Schools

Board Approved: 3/10/2025

Pawnee City Public Schools
P. O. Box 393
Pawnee City, NE 68420-0393

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Important Dates

Mon., Feb. 2	**NO SCHOOL - Teachers to attend Educators Conference**
Wed., Feb. 11	Parent/Teacher Conferences - 4:00-7:30
Thurs., Feb. 12	Parent/Teacher Conferences - 4:00-7:30
Fri., Feb. 27	**NO PRESCHOOL**
Sun., March 8	Daylight Savings Time Begins - Move clocks forward 1 hour
Thurs., March 12	**NO SCHOOL - Spring Break**
Fri., March 13	**NO SCHOOL - Spring Break**
Mon., March 16	**NO SCHOOL for students - Teacher Inservice**
Fri., March 27	**NO PRESCHOOL**
Looking Ahead:	
Fri., April 3	**NO SCHOOL - Easter Break**
Sun., April 5	Easter Sunday
Mon., April 6	**NO SCHOOL for students - Teacher Inservice**