



April
2026
Vol. 28
No. 9

Dakota Prairie Knight Reader

<http://www.dakota-prairie.k12.nd.us>

A Few Things by Jay Slade, Superintendent



Hello everyone and welcome to April;

April – the month of warming weather, getting back outside, and the hum of farm machinery.

To begin with, I want to congratulate our Nelson County Chargers Boys Basketball Team for a few reasons. #1 Congrats to the players and coaches on qualifying for the State “B” in Minot and bringing home 6th place. You played hard, competed against the best teams in the state, and proved time and time again you belong in that discussion. #2 Congrats to our fans for being there supporting and cheering on the boys. I know I am biased here, but I think we had more than double the amount of fans our opponents did that first night and we were of course much louder. #3 Congrats to parents, communities, and activity staff members for putting our best foot forward sending off and being there for our team. It was pretty cool seeing all the things the communities did to show support for the team.

My second topic is spring events. As you all know, spring in North Dakota means the weather is unpredictable. Elementary Volleyball, Track and Field, Softball, and Baseball are either starting their season or are in full stride. Speech, Music and other Academic events are also beginning their post season events. As of right now, practices for track and softball will be in McVille and baseball practices will be in Tolna. Regarding games/events please check the website regularly for changes. We will always try to keep the website updated with new information as we get it. Good luck to all participants!

For my third topic, I would like to discuss outstanding bills/balances. As money gets tighter for every household, so too does it get tighter for all schools. Dakota Prairie is no exception to this rule. Our general rule of thumb has been and will continue to be, we take care of the kids walking into our doors. Whether that means giving seconds on meals, to providing preschool services at a vastly reduced rate, or procuring the latest in technology to help aid in instruction, we will continue to operate under the premise of “is this good for kids”? If the an-

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A Few Things continued

swer is yes, we try to find a way to financially support that choice. This philosophy is getting harder and harder to do financially. One way I am asking our stakeholders to help is to ensure you have a zero balance on any accounts with us. By doing this you are helping us continue our goal of supporting all of our DP students. Please call if you have any questions or concerns about your bill.

For my last topic, I would like to speak directly to our student drivers. Please be aware and respectful of farm equipment out on the road. As you are driving on our roads, be cognizant of our farmers as they move from field to field.

Have a great spring and Go Knights! Go Chargers!

LIBRARY NEWS

The new book display shelves in both buildings are freshly restocked. At the elementary school, those books tend to fly off right away. Already sought after is the Wings of Fire graphic novel book 9. A wait list started twenty minutes after it went up.

The high school, on the other hand, takes a little more coaxing than shiny book covers. Some kids have looked, but no takers yet. Instead, the popular items at the high school have been from the movie theme bulletin board. I decided to do a bulletin board in the hallway instead of pulling selected titles. I printed the movie or TV series covers for 28 books we have in our library. The three marked with post-its are currently checked out.



The Book Fair is Coming! The event of the season — The BOGO Book Fair — will be arriving at the elementary school April 27-May 1. Buy one AND get one of equal or lesser value for FREE. Monday/Tuesday elementary students will preview the fair and make wish lists. **Sales will begin on Wednesday afternoon.** Then on **Thursday, April 30th will be Family Night partnered with the 21st Century Program from 4-6:30.** Come on down and catch a good deal. Friday afternoon will be our last call purchases. I'll be available from 2 pm until 4:30 pm and then I'll pack up what remains and call it good!

Check out the eWallet feature. Go to <https://bookfairs.scholastic.com> to set up an eWallet account.

Create a new eWallet in just minutes

Start from your school's Book Fair homepage—available three weeks before your Fair begins—to set up an eWallet for each child for every Fair, then:

1. Sign in or create a new Scholastic account
2. Select "Create an eWallet"
3. Choose "I'm a parent..."
4. Add funds and/or invite family and friends to add money to your child's eWallet

eWallet funds are available immediately and you can add additional money, create an eWallet for another child, and more, in the eWallet section of your [Scholastic account](#).

FIND YOUR FAIR TO SET UP AN EWALLET

NC CHARGER BAND AND CHOIR

April 1st Solo/Ensemble contest @ Jamestown

May 2nd State Music

May 5th Spring Concert Tuesday @ 6pm at Dakota Prairie High School

Dates may change. Watch this section and social media for updates to this schedule throughout the school year.

Emily and Ava from LHS and Annika and Kendra from DPHS spent two days at VCSU. They participated in the Viking Vocal Days. They spent time practicing with the college choir, vocal lessons, and master classes. On Friday evening, faculty from VCSU performed solo pieces and different college choirs sang. The Jamestown Community Women’s Choir also performed. The two-day event ended with a concert on Saturday afternoon where they sang with the college choir, some HS students from other schools performed solos as well. It was a fun two days with a lot of singing and much laughter.



Easter Break for Students:
April 3rd and April 6th

April 6th is a Teacher Work Day.
Students do not have school that day.

PROM SCHEDULE

PHOTOS

5:00 PM – 6:30 PM
STUDENTS/DATES ONLY
BREATHALYZED, LINED UP BY 6:30

GRAND MARCH

7:00 PM – 7:30 PM
DOORS OPEN TO FAMILIES AT 6:30PM

DANCE!

7:30 PM – 11:00 PM
REFRESHMENTS SERVED

LOADING BUSESSES

11:00 PM
ALL STUDENTS ATTENDING POST
PROM MUST RIDE THE BUS

POST PROM

12:00 AM – 2:00 AM
POST PROM AT DOCKSIDE IN
DEVILS LAKE

State Update

The Chargers finished the District 4 Tournament as the No. 3 seed. They advanced to the Region 2 Championship, where they fell to Midway/Minto, but still secured a spot in a State Qualifier game.



In that matchup, the Chargers dominated the third quarter, outscoring Linton/HMB 17-9 on their way to a 62-47 victory at the SCHEELS Center in the Sanford Health Athletic Complex. The win punched their ticket to the State Tournament at the Minot State Dome, marking the first appearance for Lakota since 1976 and the first for Dakota Prairie since 2009.

Entering the ND Division B Boys Basketball State Tournament as the No. 8 seed, Nelson County (18-7) faced top-seeded Central McLean (25-0) on Thursday in the third game of the day.

On Day 2, Nelson County responded with a strong 69-52 win over No. 4 seed Midway/Minto in the consolation semifinals, avenging their Region 2 Championship loss.

On Day 3, Nelson County fell to No. 7 seed North Star, 64-48, in the fifth-place game, finishing sixth in the Co-Op's first-ever state tournament appearance.

Region 2 was well represented at the tournament, with North Star placing fifth, Nelson County sixth, and Midway/Minto finishing seventh.



SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

~ UNOFFICIAL MINUTES~

DAKOTA PRAIRIE SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2026, 7:00 P.M.

REGULAR BOARD MEETING IN PERSON AND ON ZOOM

- ◆ Mr. David Blasey—President
- ◆ Mr. Charlie Stein
- ◆ Mrs. Jennifer Rusten
- ◆ Mrs. Nikki Ohnstad
- ◆ Mrs. Anna Halvorson

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Dave Blasey with members Jennifer Rusten, Charlie Stein and Nikki Ohnstad present. Anna Halvorson was present via Zoom. Also present were Superintendent Jay Slade, Principals Jackie Bye, Clay Johnson and Lori Dahl, Business Manager.

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Motion by Charlie Stein Second by Jennifer Rusten to approve the agenda with the addition of the Athletic Director Report. All in favor, motion carried.

The board called for public comment at this time. There being none the meeting continued.

Motion by Nikki Ohnstad Second by Jennifer Rusten by to adjourn to executive session under NDCC 44-04.19.1(9) Family Education Rights ad Privacy Act (FERPA. Time 7:04 p.m. went into session.

The board reconvened to regular session at 7:21 p.m.

The minutes and bills were presented for consideration. Motion by Charlie Stein Second by Anna Halvorson to approve the minutes as printed and the bills for payment. All in favor.

Athletic Director Report: Girls Basketball had a good season, they ended just short of the regional tournament, Boys Basketball is in the Regional Tournament, will be playing in the title game of the region on March 12th. Track has started, practice rotates Lakota Community Center, Lakota high school and Dakota Prairie High School. Still looking for a Junior High Softball coach, baseball will start next week, boys golf has signup sheets out, winter banquet is set for April 1st. Mr. Sand is working on a report to NDHSAA showing that our coaches are certified. He attended the athletic director meeting in Devils Lake for NE Region and next year with changes, and he will be attending NDIAAA conference; pictures for spring sports are being scheduled.

Elementary Principal Report: March and April events, Elem Volleyball started this past Monday, 8 from 5th grade and 16 6th grade students. NAEP tests were today for 4th grade; parent teachers conferences and professional development will be on March 18th in McVille. NDA+ tests at the end of April and beginning of May. Spelling B was held in McVille. Mr. Slade thanked Dr. Bye and Traci and Hunter Sand for all the help with the Spelling Bee. The Counseling Intern interview was held today; it may be possible to have the person 2 days per week. Elementary student council fundraisers will be used for a playground bench in memory of Liam D. and to a family fundraiser that is held in April. Building maintenance, student successes, and challenges were also reported. Pre K numbers for next year look to be 6 with a possibility of more.

High School Principal Report: Student recognition, E-Sports 3 went to State, Wrestling is complete; we have students in Hockey, and they are also done with their seasons. Mathcounts team is going [Continued on page 6](#)

School Board Minutes continued.

to the State in Bismarck, [large group](#) music competed today and the Choir and Band performed very well. The 8th graders are going curling, Speech is mid season, we have one student qualified in 2 events for State, the regional meet will be in McVille. Prom, job openings Junior High Math position and business position and para position will be open. Parent teacher conferences and PD, State testing is mid-April. Met with Safety committee and concerns, snow on the streets, Nominated Betty Hurst for Nelson County Teacher of the Year, Teacher observations are in progress.

Superintendent items for discussion: Information for open enrollment forms that were approved for attendance in Lakota.

Staff resignations and retirements were discussed. Mara Berdal and Kelly Johnson are resigning at the end of this school year. Motion by Anna Halvorson, second by Charlie Stein to accept the resignations with regret. All in favor, motion carried.

We have 3 retirements at the Elementary at the end of this school term. Sharon Gunderson, Mona Marquart and Glenn Phillips, Motion by Jennifer Rusten, second by Nikki Ohnstad to accept the resignations of Sharon Gunderson, Mona Marquart and Glenn Phillips with regret at the end of this school term. All in favor, motion carried.

Superintendent Slade's 2nd evaluation was completed at this time.

Policy BEC and GACA were presented for second reading. Motion by Charlie [Stein](#) second by Jennifer Rusten, to approve Policies BEC and GACA for 2nd reading. All in favor, motion carried.

Policies FBA, FCA, GACE, HCBA, KACA and KADA were presented for updates. Motion by Jennifer Rusten, second by Charlie Stein, to approve the updates to policies: FBA, FCA, GACE, HCBA, KACA and KADA. All in favor, motion carried.

The financial reports were reviewed. Motion by Charlie Stein Second by Jennifer Rusten to approve the financial reports as presented. All in favor, motion carried.

New Business: Spelling Bee was discussed; the board would like a letter sent to the County Commissioners stating their disappointment in the lack of preparation and communication from the office of the County Superintendent of Schools regarding the Spelling Bee. Motion by Anna Halvorson, second by Charlie Stein to send a letter to the county commissioners. All in favor.

Next Meeting April 15, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

Adjourn Charlie Stein, second by Nikki Ohnstad, all in favor, motion carried.

Lori Dahl, Business Manager

Dave Blasey, Chairperson

HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

Music Trip 2026

Article submitted by Mr. Martin Olsen

The plan this year was to travel to Jamestown University and spend the afternoon with music faculty from the college. After working we were to head to Fargo for supper and some fun activities. Next day we were supposed to travel to Minneapolis to attend a Minnesota Symphony Orchestra Concert. We were going to listen to music from "West Side Story".

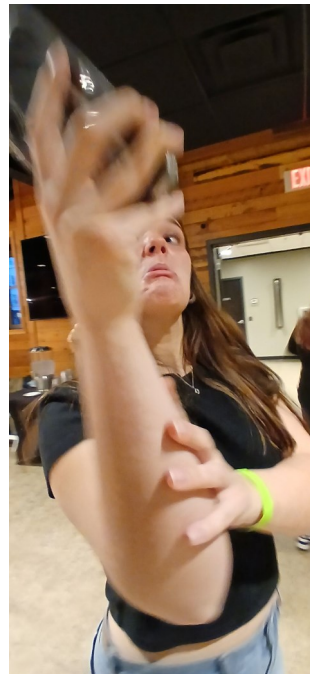
Due to weather and late starts as well as possible 18 inches of snow in Minneapolis, we canceled on Jamestown and drove straight to Fargo. On our way to Fargo, we made the decision to also cancel our trip to Minneapolis. So a whole new trip had to be planned as we were headed to Fargo.

What a great Trip we planned. I do say we, since I get a lot of help from others. On Friday, we ended up at a square dance event where students, teacher and bus driver dove into the world of folk music and square dancing. After the dance there was a Folk/Bluegrass concert that we attended.

On Saturday, we went to Excalibur, a place for bowling, pizza and some arcade games. Donovan ended up as the Air Hockey Champion. On Saturday evening the students were offered to go to the basketball game in Fargo or chill at the hotel and pool.

A great trip it was with great students. Shopping is not something HS students need to learn. That is a skill they have. We stopped twice at the mall in Fargo and showed off our skills.

A special thanks to Larry Hoyt and Kori Madche for helping to make this a great trip. Also thank you to all students for making it so easy for me.

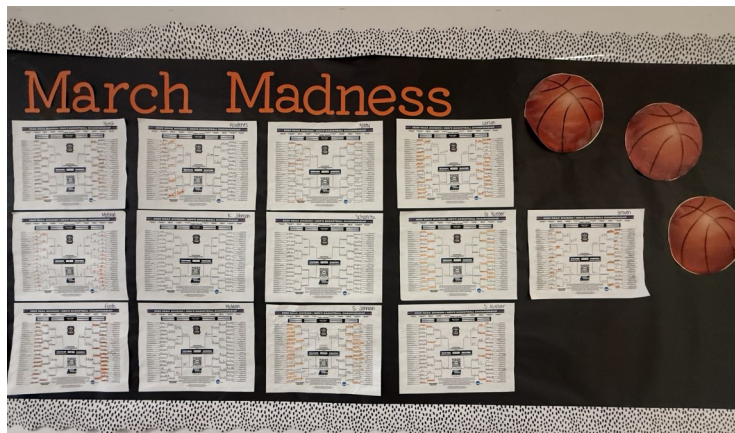


HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

7 Mindsets project by 10A. They collected food and hygiene products throughout the month of March from all areas of our community. All items were delivered to the food pantry in Michigan. At the end of April we will travel to Grand Forks for our last project.



Knight Times filled out March Madness brackets for a Knight Time challenge. The group with the winning bracket will receive donuts!



Seventh graders dissected squid this month.



HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

Several 10th graders toured the University of MN-Crookston with the Trio Program recently. Several are interested in animal science, which is one of the best programs at this college.



The Large Group Music Festival was in Carrington on March 11th. To officially star at the event, both judges have to give a star rating. From low to high rating is 3, 2, 1, star. Nelson County Choir received a star and a 1 rating. Nelson County Band received star and star. Congratulations!



This month, our 7 Mindsets group worked on two exciting projects. First, students painted a canvas featuring a flower design, with each petal representing one of the 7 Mindsets. For the second project, students began designing a custom door logo using the Cricut for a local fire department. Be sure to check back next month to see the finished product!

HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

The 8th Graders went curling at the Lake Region Curling Club in Devils Lake.



HIGH SCHOOL NEWS



Among Dr. Bye's submissions this month, she also sent some photos from the Senior class when they were in elementary.



NHS is hosting a Blood Drive at the Petersburg Community Center on Wednesday, April 15th

Scan the QR code to make an appointment.

Dakota Prairie High School Community Blood Drive

32 DONORS NEEDED!

DATE: APRIL 15, 2026
TIME: 9:30 A.M. - 1:45 P.M.

202 5TH STREET
PETERSBURG, ND 58272



Donate April 6-30 and you'll be entered for a chance to win one of two \$10,000 gift cards! That's enough to buy groceries for a year! Book your appointment today.

Call Kelsey Beckstrom @701-345-8233 OR scan the QR code to schedule your appointment!

For more information visit us at vitalant.org or call 877-258-4825. **Because of you, life doesn't stop.**



~ Elementary News ~

From the Desk of Dr. Jackie Bye, Elementary Principal

Happy Spring! By the time you get this April Knight Reader I am thinking we will have had beautiful weather and our winter worries will be over. It's a good thought if nothing else. April is always an exciting time at Dakota Prairie Elementary as we begin to see signs of spring and celebrate all the growth our students have made throughout the year. That growth takes the help and support of many people, as this quote by a famous North Dakotan reminds us:

*"The strength of the team is **each** individual member. The strength of each member is **the team**."* ~ Phil Jackson



That quote will also sound familiar if you were able to enjoy the first musical by the talented 4th, 5th and 6th grade music students of Ms. Stephanie Bina. A **big shout out** to Ms. Bina and those students for taking a risk and performing their first every musical, "**The Jungle Book**". It was so much fun to see the talent and expression in all of the students. What a great way for students to find another activity that might be their favorite. I saw a lot of future actors and actresses performing.

We are excited to kick off our 5th and 6th grade girls volleyball season! We have eight 5th grade girls and fifteen 6th grade girls participating this year. A big thank you to coaches Cassondra Schock and Courtney Stein for their time and dedication to our students. We look forward to a fun and successful season!



Our Preschool Program will be held on **Tuesday, April 28 at 10:00 AM**. This special event is put together by preschool teacher Sara Corby, paraprofessional Patty Lippert, and music teacher Stephanie Bina. We invite families and community members to join us as our youngest learners showcase what they have been working on.

April will also bring back some favorite school events. Our **Spring Fling Talent Show** has been moved from May to April 17, this year to better fit everyone's busy schedules. Our students have amazing talents, and we want to make sure as many people as possible have the opportunity to enjoy and celebrate them.



We will also hold our **2nd Annual Color Run**. More information will be sent home soon. As a reminder, we do not expect families to donate large amounts—there are options ranging from \$1.00 to \$20.00. Every contribution helps. Funds raised will once again support our end-of-year celebration, "**The Best Day Ever**." While plans are still being finalized, Student Council has shared some

great ideas. Our primary goals are to host a fun and memorable day for students and to provide every elementary student with a Dakota Prairie Elementary t-shirt. These shirts will be worn for field trips, monthly celebrations, and other special events—and students are always welcome to wear them anytime! Each year will feature a new design. If funding allows, we do some other wish items on a list the students are developing as well.

We will kick off the month with an **Easter Egg Hunt on Thursday, April 2**, and wrap up April with **North Dakota State Testing for students in grades 3–6**, taking place the week of April 27 through May 1. The ND A+ Interim Assessment for grades K-2 takes place the beginning of May. It is always exciting to see how much our students have learned and grown throughout the school year. We try to keep the pressure of the tests to a minimum and only ask the students to put forth their best effort, and not be scared or nervous about the outcomes.



The 4th and 5th grade students had a chance to learn about adolescents with the Nelson County Public Health this last month, and in April the 3rd grade will be doing some seed planting and learning about healthy food choices with Nelson County Public Health, as well. And, then that project will continue into May.

Thank you for allowing me to be an important part of your child's life. The enthusiasm and genuine kindness they bring to each day is truly one of the greatest rewards of this work, and I am grateful to be part of such a supportive school community.

If you have any questions, concerns, or something you would like to discuss please stop in, email, or call me jackie.bye@k12.nd.us 701-322-4771.

~ Elementary News ~

Some DPE students celebrated Pi (3.14) Day a day early on Friday, March 13.



Also 2nd grade boys took advantage of the new snow.

~ Elementary News ~

21st Century Parent surveys are due! Feedback from these surveys helps us to continually improve our programming as well as secure program for future years. If your child (ren) were enrolled in STEAM camp last summer or morning/afterschool programs this year, please complete ASAP!

Click the link to access the parent survey - <https://forms.office.com/r/aDhTNk5QNu>

Save the Date
 STEAM Camp - McVilIe
 May 26-29
 STEAM Camp - Petersburg
 June 2-5

Watch for registration forms in May!

AR Awards—Feb ‘26

<p><u>25 Points</u> Sadie Olson</p> <p><u>100 Points</u> Camryn Slettebak</p>	<p><u>200 Points</u> Gracie Schneider Mallori Schock</p>
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Thursday, April 2nd
 Dip ‘n Dots Day
 \$4.00 each

UPCOMING ELEMENTARY EVENTS

SPRING FLING TALENT SHOW	FRIDAY, APRIL 17	6:30
<i>The Spring Fling is a change in date due to conflicts in May.</i>		
ELEMENTARY COLOR RUN	FRIDAY, APRIL 24	2:00
BOGO BOOK FAIR	APRIL 27-MAY 1	
PRESCHOOL PROGRAM	TUESDAY, APRIL 28	10:00
BOOK FAIR FAMILY NIGHT	THURSDAY, APRIL 30	4:00-6:30
SPRING CONCERT	TUESDAY, MAY 12	7:00
KINDERGARTEN GRADUATION	TUESDAY, MAY 19	10:00
6TH GRADE GRADUATION	TUESDAY, MAY 19	2:00



DAKOTA PRAIRIE 5TH & 6TH
VOLLEYBALL SPRING 2026
Updated March 23, 2026

Coach: Cassondra Schock

Assistant: Courtney Stein

DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TEAMS	TIME	OTHER
MARCH 9	FIRST PRACTICE	BG	5 & 6	3:35	
10	PRACTICE	BG	5 & 6	3:35	
12	PRACTICE	BG	5 & 6	3:35	
13	PRACTICE	BG	5 & 6	3:35	
MARCH 16	NO PRACTICE	MID WINTER FOLLIES			
17	PRACTICE	BG	5 & 6	3:35	
23	PRACTICE	BG	5 & 6	3:35	
24	PRACTICE	BG	5 & 6	3:35	PICTURES 1:00
26	MIDKOTA	MCVILLE	5 & 6	4:30 YES	HUDL
27	GRIGGS COUNTY	COOPERSTOWN	5 & 6	4:00	Leave 2:40
30	PRACTICE	BG	5 & 6	3:35	9
31	PRACTICE	BG	5 & 6	3:35	10
APRIL 2	MIDKOTA	BINFORD	5 & 6	4:30 YES	Leave 3:10
3	NO SCHOOL				
6	NO SCHOOL				
7	LARIMORE	MCVILLE	5 & 6	4:00	HUDL
9	LAKOTA	LAKOTA HS	5 & 6	4:00	Leave 2:50
10	PRACTICE	BG	5 & 6	3:35	
13	PRACTICE	BG	5 & 6	3:35	
14	GRIGGS COUNTY	MCVILLE	5 & 6	4:00	HUDL
16	LARIMORE	LARIMORE ELEM	5 & 6	4:00	Leave 2:40
17	NO PRACTICE	SPRING FLING			
20	PRACTICE	BG	5 & 6	3:35	
21	LAKOTA	MCVILLE	5 & 6	4:00	HUDL
23	PRACTICE	BG	5 & 6	3:35	
24	PRACTICE TBD	COLOR RUN			
27	PRACTICE	BG	5 & 6	3:35	
28	PRACTICE	BG	5 & 6	3:35	PRACTICE
30	PRACTICE	BG	5 & 6	3:35	
MAY 1	PRACTICE	BG	5 & 6	3:35	
MAY 2	CENTRAL VALLEY	JAMBOREE	One Team	TBD	PARENTS

1. The 5th grade games will be played first, with the 6th grade after.
 - a. All home games will be streamed on HUDL. Find on the Dakota Prairie Website.
 - i. <https://www.dakota-prairie.k12.nd.us/>
 - b. Search under DP Elementary Sports
 2. Players can ride the shuttle bus home after practices, but not home games.
 3. There will be a bus for away games.
 4. The red is to be determined if Central Valley has a jamboree on the first weekend in May. If they don't, then the last day of volleyball will be April 28.

April 2026

- April 3—No School: Good Friday
- April 6—No School: Teacher Work Day
- April 11—Prom in Petersburg
- April 15—School Board Meeting @ 7 pm
- April 17—Spring Fling @ DPE
- April 30—Book Fair Family Night 4-6:30 pm

PLEASE CHECK THE DAKOTA PRAIRIE HOME PAGE FOR THE MOST CURRENT ACTIVITIES SCHEDULES

<https://www.dakota-prairie.k12.nd.us>

Future Dates of Interest

- April 3—No School: Good Friday*
- April 6—No school: Teacher Work Day*
- May 21—Last Day of School**
- May 22—Teacher Work Day
- May 24—Graduation @ 1pm*



**Dakota Prairie School District
Box 37
Petersburg, ND 58272**

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Information:*

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Comments may be made in writing or by calling 701-345-8233 during school hours.

Discrimination and Harassment Grievance Procedure	Nondiscrimina- tion and Anti- Harassment Policy	Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure
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Dakota Prairie
Course Descriptions



Dakota Prairie does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, or age, in its programs or activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The Dakota Prairie Superintendent has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies. (Supt. Jay B. Slade, P.O. Box 37, Petersburg, ND, 58272, 701-345-8233, jay.slade@k12.nd.us).

Title IX Coordinator: Dakota Prairie Superintendent – District Office Phone Number 701-345-8233 (Supt. Jay B. Slade, P.O. Box 37, Petersburg, ND, 58272, 701-345-8233, jay.slade@k12.nd.us).