

CONESTOGA PUBLIC SCHOOLS TOWNHALL



SUPERINTENDENT, MR. MICHAEL APPLE

Parents and Patrons:

As we near the holidays I would personally like to wish you and all of yours the very best!

Some things to remember as we near colder weather which probably also means snow!

Please ensure the school district has updated contact information such as phone numbers and email addresses. When school is delayed or maybe even called off we will utilize our notification systems to alert parents. It would also help to follow the schools social media accounts for weather related updates as well as other pertinent school information and news. Follow those accounts via Facebook and X at Conestoga Public Schools

Believe it or not we do watch the weather very closely and always try to determine what impact it will have on the school day or any scheduled events.

Please realize it take a series of events to make a decision to call off school, usually snow of a lengthy duration with high wind will do the trick, however if we call off every time a flake is in the air we would still be attending school after the month of May.

Remember as the parent you always have the final decision for the safety of your child.

DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES, MR. KRAUSE

Conestoga Public Schools has an opportunity for parents of students who receive special education and related services. The Nebraska Department of Education is gathering information about special education programs across the state. By answering these questions, our hope is that your help will improve services in our district. Facilitating parental involvement is one area covered in the survey. By completing this survey, NDE is seeking how districts provide opportunities for parents to participate in their child's program and impact school improvement activities.

All responses are CONFIDENTIAL and demographic information collected is not for identification purposes. Demographic data is used for reporting to the US Department of Education to ensure responses are representative of the state of Nebraska in terms of race/ethnicity.

The link for the survey can be found on the school website. The survey is open now until April 15th, 2024. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please reach out to Mr. Krause at nkrause@conestogacougars.org.

COLLEGE WEEK

7-12 GUIDANCE COUNSELOR, MRS. KREIFELS

Conestoga participates in EducationQuest's College Access Grant program. The goal of this program is to develop and support college-access activities. As part of this grant we want to make sure to expose our students to the variety of opportunities that are available for post-secondary education.

Recently the Freshmen class visited Peru State College. They toured campus, visited a dorm room, met with admissions representatives, and ate in the cafeteria. Students also heard from Conestoga alums that are current students at Peru State.

The sophomores traveled to Lincoln to visit Southeast Community College and Nebraska Wesleyan. By visiting both campuses they were able to see the differences and similarities between a community college and university. At SCC they got to witness how hands-on the learning is, along with the variety of programs available. Nebraska Wesleyan demonstrated the benefits of a smaller university in a larger college town. We had some extra time between the two visits, so we took a bus tour of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Students drove through both City and East Campus and staff pointed out sights and gave them information as if they were on a true tour bus.

Research shows that the more students are on college campuses, the more they can picture that as part of their future. We hope by exposing our underclassmen to what a campus visit is like before they are upperclassmen, they will feel more comfortable when attending personal college visits as upperclassmen.



MRS. SAM AND MRS. AMY'S PRESCHOOL CLASSES STUDY PUMPKINS



In October the preschoolers in Mrs. Sam and Mrs. Amy's preschool classes explored pumpkins and even took our yearly traditional field trip to Avoca Bloom Where You are Planted. The field trip was on a beautiful day and the students were able to go on a hayrack ride, explore all of the fun things at the patch and even got to take a mini pumpkin home! In the classroom the students explored the inside of a pumpkin and learned about what pumpkins can be used for, what the parts of a pumpkin are called, baked pumpkin bars out of pumpkins, and even decorated them for fun!



CONESTOGA STAFF HONORED AT NSCTA CONVENTION

Two staff members were honored for their contributions to the speech and theatre community at the annual Nebraska Speech Communications and Theatre Association held their annual conventions and awards ceremony in Kearney on September 22nd in Kearney. Mrs. Schlichtemeier was awarded her platinum level educator and coaching endorsements. These endorsements are earned by individuals who have been teaching and coaching for a minimum of seven years, have been active members of the NSCTA by attending convention and serving on the board, and have continued their education through graduate work and/or trainings provided through the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).



Mr. Krause was awarded the NSCTA Outstanding Administrator Award during the ceremony for his outstanding support of and dedication to the fine arts. Mr. Krause was nominated by Mrs. Schlichtemeier and Keri Hogue of Elmwood Murdock for Mr. Krause's willingness to help with numerous speech tournaments in the area and judging the at the state tournament after his 13 year tenure as the head coach at Louisville.

7-12 INSTRUCTIONAL COACH

MS. CONANT

Everything is in full swing here at Conestoga Jr/Sr. High, and I cannot believe that the end of first semester is right around the corner. The teachers have been working with the ESU staff on Strong Instruction, including strategies for deep engagement and scaffolding. These professional development days provide our teachers with the time needed to consider some new strategies they can bring back to the classroom.

AI Technology has been a hot topic lately, and that is no different here at Conestoga. Teachers have had a number of conversations about how AI may impact student learning, both positively and negatively. If you have any questions or concerns regarding AI technology, I would be happy to discuss them with you.

In order to ensure the success of all students, the MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Support) Team has started putting some new systems in place. Our goal is to identify students who may need additional support and provide them with that support so that they can do well in all their classes. This process can take time, but it is worth it in the end. If you would like additional information about this, please reach out to me.



GROWTH MINDSET & THE POWER OF YET!

ELEMENTARY INSTRUCTIONAL COACH, MRS. GLAZEBROOK

We are always learning! During the first semester, a group of elementary teachers completed a book study on The Growth Mindset Coach. Having a growth mindset means you believe yourself and other individuals have the power to acquire an unlimited amount of new knowledge and skills through practice, perseverance, and effort. The alternative to a growth mindset is a fixed mindset. A fixed mindset is believing that each individual is born with a fixed level of intelligence/ability. This book was chosen because we would like to continue to develop the culture of a growth mindset within the elementary school.

To help our students develop their growth mindset we will strive to:

- Emphasize the process of learning over perfection
- Encourage students to tackle new challenges
- Strengthen our brains through practice
- Learn to give and accept feedback
- Set goals and work towards achieving them
- View mistakes as opportunities for learning
- Promote the POWER of YET! (see image)

We invite you to try these same strategies at home in order to support us in this journey and to foster a growth mindset within all of our young learners.



ACTIVITIES AT CONESTOGA

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL & ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR, MR. COLE WILLS

The 2023 Fall Sports/Activity seasons have completed at Conestoga Jr/Sr High School. We want to thank everyone who contributed to this successful season: student-athletes, coaches, parents, guardians, event workers, volunteers, teachers, administrators, Cougar Mania, the Booster Club, and many more... Your efforts and support are greatly appreciated!

Many coaches and sponsors have highlighted several great things accomplished this season in this newsletter. Some other highlights include:

- The Cass Wildcats finished their last week of the regular season with 2 wins over Logan View and Raymond Central. Elizabeth Harvey was named 1st Team NCC All-Conference.
- Varsity Volleyball finished the season with a record of 18-13. They were champions of the Tekamah-Herman Tournament. Maggie Fiene was named 2nd Team NCC All-Conference, while Ava Tegels and Davida Garrett were named All-Conference Honorable Mention.
- The choir performed well at the Conference Choral Clinic at DC West on November 6th.
- E-sports competed deep into the Super Smash Bros playoffs.
- Mock Trial competed well in 3 competitions at the Cass and Sarpy County Courthouses.

Upcoming November Event Dates:

- November 20th - NCC Play Production at the Lofte Community Theater
- November 21st - Girls/Boys Basketball Jamboree at Lourdes CC
- December 1st - District Play Production at Platteview High School
- December 2nd - Cougar Classic Wrestling Tournament

JUNIOR HIGH FOOTBALL

COACH, MR. LUTT

The Conestoga JH Football team finished up their season with a 5-1 record with the only blemish being a 2 point loss to Yutan. They racked up victories over Palmyra, Falls City, Raymond Central, Louisville and Auburn. The offensive line paved the way to help put up 246 points with a balanced attack on the ground and through the air. Their defense was relentless in only allowing 54 points including 3 shutouts against Palmyra, Falls City and Raymond Central. The team consisted of 23 players that worked hard in practice and in the classroom. We would like to thank our 8th graders for their contributions to the programs and wish them luck in their high school careers: Jude Keene, Peyton Lutt, Brandt Morrical, Griffin Lange, Braylon Jackson, Jagger Hild, Chris Warner, Owen Bogatz, Elias Johnson, Aiden Platt, Taylor Warren, Gage Kelley, Christian Zamorano, Gaige Rahming, Carson Snipes, Gage Saxton, and Alex Impens. A Special thank you goes to assistants Brady Bergmeyer and John Morrical for their time and dedication to this season.

JUNIOR HIGH VOLLEYBALL

COACH, MR. SKILES

The junior high girls volleyball team recently completed their 2023 campaign. This year, 30 girls participated in volleyball, including 10 8th graders and 20 7th graders. The group was very coachable and brought a lot of energy to practice and games. Even though the team was younger overall, they played at a high level and made strides each day to improve their skills and learn how to compete. The girls put forth a lot of effort, and maintained a "team first" attitude throughout the season. The coaches are very proud of the girls and feel the future is bright for Conestoga volleyball!



CONESTOGA EMBARKS ON A “GRAND ADVENTURE” FOR ONE ACT SEASON

COACH, MRS. SCHLICHTEMEIR

Conestoga Drama Department is ready for an “oh-so-wonderful” one-act season with this year’s production of “The Grand Adventures of Pip and Mimsy!” The show is the first comedy Conestoga has produced since 2011 and the debut of playwright Jack Sale.

The play, set in Victorian London, follows the titular Pip and Mimsy, two street urchins who are annoyingly enthusiastic, melodramatic, and awaiting the return of their missing father after many years. Accompanied by friend Fimm Bimbles, the children have a chance encounter with an evil and hypnotic doll named Begeloits, who draws the unwitting children into her nefarious plan to kill the Queen.

Leading the cast is senior Dani Ahrens, playing Mimsy, and junior Piper Isham, as Pip. Junior Louie Caniglia plays their friend Fimm and sophomore Hannah Bogatz voices the evil Begeloits. Pip and Mimsy encounter many memorable characters during their “grand adventures,” including the toy shop owner Mrs. Grizzles (junior Alyssa Batt), who gifts Begeloits to the children, their miserly Uncle Scrooge (sophomore Grant Tesarek) and his ghostly associate Jacob Marley (seniors John McConnell and Zach Smith), the King and Queen of England (played by senior Mickey Turner Hickey and junior Averie Andersen) and their niece Gabrielle (sophomore Savina Poutre), who has some devious plans of her own. Rounding out the cast are Londoners (senior Evelyn Murdoch and juniors Bella Grasso, Ryleigh Hill, and Alaina Morrical) and the Queen’s guard (seniors Brody McClatchey, Zach Smith and Aaron Watson).

13 students are working backstage to insure a successful production as part of the stage crew. Leading the crew is senior John McConnell, who serves as stage manager and sound technician. Junior Andy Lamoureux and 8th graders Owen Bogatz, Spencer Schlichtemeier, and Carson Snipes make up the light crew. Sophomore Jadyn Light is serving as costume mistress and senior Aaron Watson is prop master for the second year. Hair and makeup is led by juniors Hannah Bogatz, Maggie Fiene, Celeste Ortega, and sophomore Dre Ruark. Sophomore Jozlyn Keene is serving as assistant stage manager and film. The brute squad is made up of 7th grader Miguel Caniglia, 8th grader Cody Remmers, junior Landan Yard, and seniors Brody McClatchey and Zach Smith.

The team started their performance season a little later than usual due to members attending National FFA. The season kicked off on November 9th with the home performance, followed by the first competition at York, where the team earned a superior rating and 6 acting awards (Piper, Dani, Louie, Averie, Mickey, and Savina). Dani was also named the top lead actress for the Class A/B division. The team will then travel to Lincoln Southwest on November 18th before heading to conference at the Lofte on November 20th and districts at Platteview on December 1st



HS VOLLEYBALL

COACH, MS. PLIHAL

We are thrilled to share the exciting news of our victorious volleyball season, culminating in a remarkable 18-11 record! The Varsity girls took home the Championship trophy after winning the Tekamah Herman schools. The Junior Varsity girls took home a 4th place victory in the Weeping Water Tournament. The dedication, teamwork, and passion displayed by our athletes have truly set the court ablaze with triumph. The unwavering support from our fans has been the driving force behind our team's success. Your cheers, encouragement, and presence at every game have fueled our players to give their best on the court. A huge shoutout to our dedicated coaching staff! Their commitment to excellence and tireless efforts in guiding our players have undoubtedly been instrumental in achieving this remarkable season.

Each player brought a unique set of skills to the game, showcasing exceptional athleticism, strategic thinking, and unmatched determination. These qualities undoubtedly contributed to our impressive win-loss ratio. Many of our players broke records and will continue to break them in the upcoming seasons. Ava Tegels broke the 1,000 career assists. Davida Garrett broke the 500 career digs with an impressive 530 digs. These two also received All Conference Honorable Mention. Maggie Fiene went on to win All Conference Second Team for her impressive season.

As we reflect on the season, we can't help but celebrate the memorable moments, the hard-fought battles, and the sheer determination displayed by our athletes. From nail-biting matches to spectacular comebacks, our team faced challenges head-on and emerged victorious.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this phenomenal season. Together, we've proven that hard work, perseverance, and a passion for the game can lead to extraordinary success.

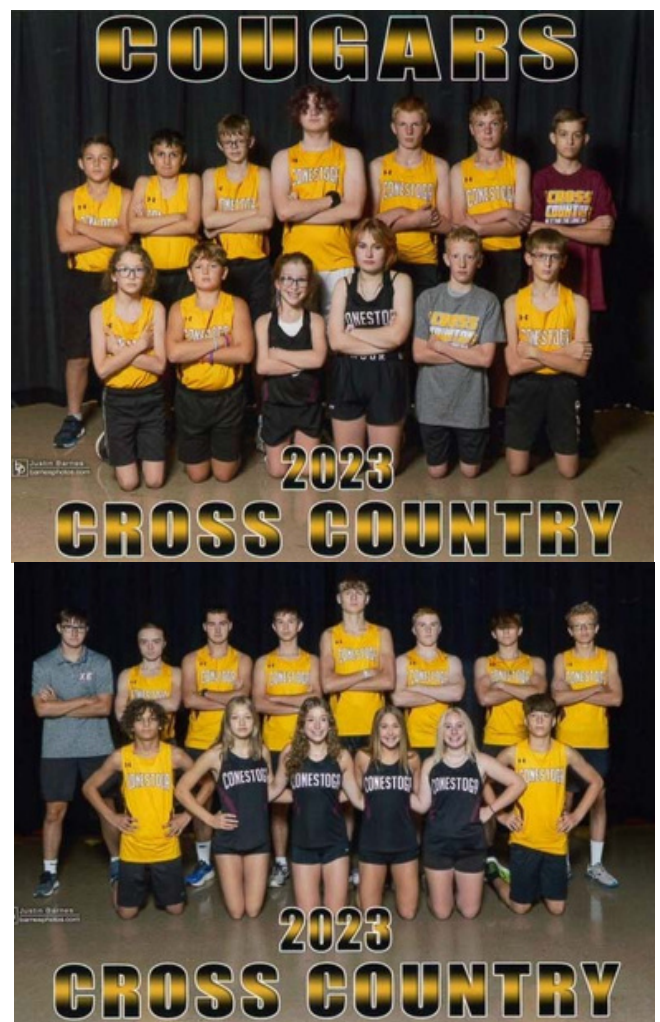
CROSS COUNTRY

COACH, MR. BURNS

The boys and girls cross country teams showed a lot of grit and passion for their craft as they completed their seasons on a high note. Lots of personal bests and personal course records were set. Three boys on our junior high teams hit a team qualifying mark and were able to compete at the JH state championships in Papillion. Cole K, Caleb B, and Logan G set the bar high for future junior high athletes when they competed at state. The junior high state meet was an all class event and had over 1,300 athletes on the day.

Our high school team picked up where they left off last year and were able to send a representative of Conestoga to the state meet for the sixth consecutive year. Dani A represented Conestoga at the state meet again this year as a senior. The rest of the team looks to continually improve and compete for a spot at state next year!

Overall this year the cross country team had over 33 members and will continue to grow in future years to come!



FFA MEMBERS ATTEND NATIONAL CONVENTION & QUALIFY FOR STATE IN LIVESTOCK JUDGING

ADVISOR, MRS. KENNEBECK

Conestoga FFA has had a busy fall! Thirteen members competed at the East Central Land Judging Competition at Branched Oak State Park on October 4th. Logan Peterson, Tanner Ahrens, Cydney Vincent, and Bridget Murdoch placed in the top 50 individually. On October 25th, Conestoga FFA welcomed 8 new members to the chapter through the new jacket ceremony. Twelve FFA members attended the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana from November 1st-4th with 70,000 members from across the country. Members heard from keynote speakers, attended the FFA Expo, watched national competitions, and attended the FFA rodeo. Participants also toured the Louisville Slugger, Kentucky Derby, and Churchill Downs. On November 8th, eight FFA members competed in District Livestock Judging. The junior livestock judging team of Ella Tegels, Kaylee Hellbusch, Tanner Ahrens, and Kash Swim placed 5th qualifying for the State FFA Convention in April. Members look forward to competing in District Leadership Development Events in January and Career Development Events in March.



FFA members at the East Central Land Judging Competition at Branched Oak State Park!



FFA members at the National FFA Convention: Louie Caniglia, Brinn Ahrens, Robbi Zech, Cydney Vincent, Bridget Murdoch, Jacob Winter, Mason Serkiz, Aaron Watason, Ava Tegels, Callie Todd, Ava Wedies, and Paityn Hoffart.



FFA welcomed 8 new members to our chapter at the New Jacket Ceremony in October! New members include: Matthew Beck, Kyler Dobry, Alyssa Gernstein, Kaylee Hellbusch, Jonathan Jeys, Bre Smart, Kash Swim, and Ella Tegels.

FFA members at the District Livestock Judging Competition in Beatrice. Ella Tegels, Kaylee Hellbusch, Tanner Ahrens, and Kash Swim placed 5th qualifying for State FFA!



COUGAR MARCHING BAND: FIRE & ICE!

COACH, MRS. VALLIS

The Conestoga Marching Band brought the Fire & Ice to their 2023 Season! This year's theme featured the songs, Jerry Lee Lewis' "Great Balls of Fire," "Let It Go" from Frozen, Vanilla Ice's "Ice Ice Baby," and Katy Perry's "Firework." Their hard work and dedication began in July during a week of Band Camp, where students spent each day 8am-4pm learning the music and rhythms to each song, as well as parade marching and making their formations for the fieldshow. Band Camp provided hours of musicianship and repetition, but more importantly, time for the band to come together as a team to bond, create memories, and become a family. Listed here are the Marching Band performance and competitions, and the ratings they received at each contest:

- 8/12 Cass County Fair
- 9/1 Nebraska State Fair
- 9/16 Apple Jack Parade, Superior Rating, 2nd Place in Class B
- 10/4 Palmyra Bluez Festival, Excellent Rating, Excellent Rating Drum Line
- 10/7 Bennington Marching Invitational, Excellent Rating
- 10/14 Oxbow Marching Competition, Superior Rating
- 10/21 Nebraska State Bandmasters State Competition, Excellent Rating

There was substantial growth from all band members from the 1st sunny day of band camp to the final performance in Kearney. Many band members took on new roles and performed outside of, just playing their instrument, such as: costume wearing, drum planking, dance choreography, and flag running. In addition to these competitions, the Cougar Marching Band performed loud and proud at each home Volleyball and Football Game! Spreading school spirit and pride through music is what we love to do, and we appreciate all of the support from the Conestoga Families, Staff, and Community!



**Conestoga Public Schools
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