

Mellette Elementary Newsletter

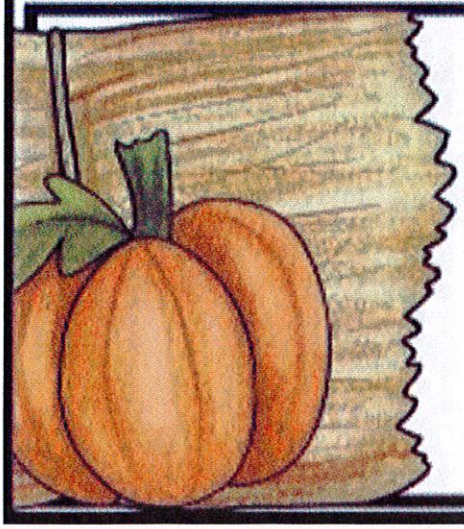
Conferences:
Please sign up for **ONE** conference per student to ensure enough slots for everyone.

Cold Weather is Coming!

Please remember to send snow pants, hat, gloves, coat, etc. with your child. They will go outside for recess every day unless the temperature is below zero or -10 windchill. Also, please label your child's items as it makes it easier to return them to the owner when lost.

Calendar Items

November 2nd PTO @ 3:30 in conf. room
November 5th: Early-Dismissal at 12:20
Conferences 1:00 – 8:00
Use QR code for sign up
November 6th -School in Session
November 17th-B/G Club Closed
November 17th- 4th Grade Music concert @ 6:00 p.m. (doors open at 5:45 p.m.)
Nov. 25th-27th : No School Thanksgiving Break



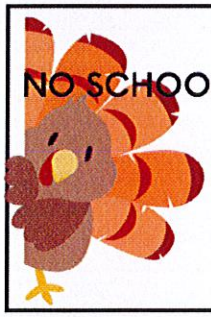
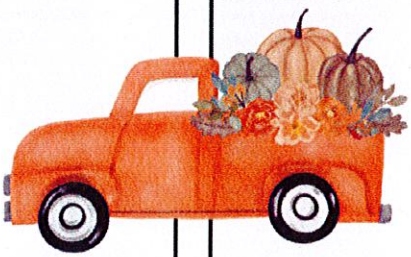
Attendance Challenge!

At Mellette Elementary, we're making attendance exciting with our new monthly attendance challenges! Each month, students who show great attendance have a chance to take part in fun rewards—like a pumpkin painting party, "Pie the Principal in the Face," and other special surprises. These challenges are a fun way to celebrate students' commitment to being at school every day and on time. We can't wait to see our students' enthusiasm and strong attendance all year long!

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NOVEMBER 2026

MENU IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE
FRUIT AND MILK IS OFFERED AT ALL BREAKFAST MEALS
VEGGIE BAR, FRUIT SELECTION AND MILK SELECTION ARE OFFERED AT ALL LUNCH MEALS.

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
WEEK 4				
2 BREAKFAST: CHOC. MUFFIN 29G GOGURT 8G H.S./M.S. VARIETY BREAKFAST CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE MILK LUNCH: PANCAKE 13G/26G OMELET FRUIT JUICE 15G CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE VEGGIES CHOICE MILK	3 BREAKFAST: APPLE FILLED DONUT 33G H.S./M.S. VARIETY BREAKFAST CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE MILK LUNCH: TOTCHO 16G CHURRO 25G CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE VEGGIES CHOICE MILK	4 BREAKFAST: PANCAKE STICK 17G H.S./M.S. VARIETY BREAKFAST CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE MILK LUNCH: BREADED CHICKEN SANDWICH 44G BAKED BEANS 30G CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE VEGGIES CHOICE MILK	5 BREAKFAST: CC FRENCH TST 37G H.S./M.S. VARIETY BREAKFAST CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE MILK LUNCH: PIZZA CRUNCHERS 21G/42G MARINARA CUP 7G GREEN BEANS 4G CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE VEGGIES CHOICE MILK	6 BREAKFAST: CARAMEL MINI 41G H.S./M.S. VARIETY BREAKFAST CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE MILK LUNCH: CHICKEN CUBES W/ GRAVY MASHED POTATOES 20G DINNER ROLL 23G CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE VEGGIES CHOICE MILK
WEEK 5				
9 BREAKFAST: MINI DONUTS 41G GOGURT 8G H.S./M.S. VARIETY BREAKFAST CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE MILK LUNCH: HAMBURGER 28G BAKED BEANS 30G CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE VEGGIES CHOICE MILK	10 BREAKFAST: FR. TST STIX 38G SAUSAGE PATTY H.S./M.S. VARIETY BREAKFAST CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE MILK LUNCH: CRISPITOS 23G/46G HASH BROWN COINS 21G CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE VEGGIES CHOICE MILK	11 BREAKFAST: BR. BURRITO 29G H.S./M.S. VARIETY BREAKFAST CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE MILK LUNCH: ORANGE CHICKEN 26G FRIED RICE 27G CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE VEGGIES CHOICE MILK	12 BREAKFAST: BB MINI PANCAKE ?G H.S./M.S. VARIETY BREAKFAST CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE MILK LUNCH: CHICKEN TENDERS 12G/18G MASHED POTATO/GRAVY 24G DINNER ROLL 23G CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE VEGGIES CHOICE MILK	13 BREAD LOAF 34G YOGURT CUP 15G H.S./M.S. VARIETY BREAKFAST CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE MILK LUNCH: SPAGHETTI 36G GREEN BEANS 4G GARLIC TOAST 24G CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE VEGGIES CHOICE MILK
WEEK 6				
16 BREAKFAST: FRUDEL 38G H.S./M.S. VARIETY BREAKFAST CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE MILK LUNCH: MINI CORN DOGS 20G/30G MAC & CHEESE ?G FR. FRUIT CUP 21G CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE VEGGIES CHOICE MILK	17 BREAKFAST: FUNNEL CAKE 38G YOGURT CUP 15G H.S./M.S. VARIETY BREAKFAST CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE MILK LUNCH: QUESIDILLA 33G FIESTA BEANS 17G CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE VEGGIES CHOICE MILK	18 BREAKFAST: BREAKFAST SAND. 24G/34G H.S./M.S. VARIETY BREAKFAST CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE MILK LUNCH: CHICKEN DRUMMIES 6G CHICKEN NUGGETS 13G/16G WEDGES 20G/BISCUIT 24G CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE VEGGIES CHOICE MILK	19 BREAKFAST: STR. MINI BAGEL 42G H.S./M.S. VARIETY BREAKFAST CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE MILK LUNCH: WAFFLES ?G SAUSAGE LINKS 4G JUICE CUP 15G CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE VEGGIES CHOICE MILK	20 BREAKFAST: BANANA MUFFIN 31G STRING CHEESE 15G H.S./M.S. VARIETY BREAKFAST CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE MILK LUNCH: LASAGNA ROLL UP 22G/42G MIXED VEGGIES 12G PLAIN BREADSTICK 14G CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE VEGGIES CHOICE MILK
C. CHOICE				
23 BREAKFAST: COOKS CHOICE H.S./M.S. VARIETY BREAKFAST CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE MILK LUNCH: COOKS CHOICE CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE VEGIES CHOICE MILK	24 BREAKFAST: COOKS CHOICE H.S./M.S. VARIETY BREAKFAST CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE MILK LUNCH: COOKS CHOICE CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE VEGIES CHOICE MILK	25 NO SCHOOL 	26 NO SCHOOL 	27 NO SCHOOL
WEEK 1				
30 BREAKFAST: CEREAL/CEREAL BAR 23G YOGURT CUP 15G H.S./M.S. VARIETY BREAKFAST CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE MILK LUNCH: CHEESEBURGER 28G FRIES 16G CHOICE FRUIT CHOICE VEGGIES CHOICE MILK				

Winter Weather Decisions: How Watertown Schools Make the Call
by Dr. Jeff Danielsen, Superintendent

As we approach the winter season in northeastern South Dakota, I want to take a moment to explain how decisions are made regarding late starts, early dismissals, and school cancellations due to winter weather. As Superintendent, your child's safety is my highest priority. We take these decisions seriously and carefully consider the weather conditions, road conditions, and forecasts before determining whether school can safely be held. We monitor several television stations, drive both city and rural roads, and consult with the National Weather Service to gather as much information as possible. Although we make every effort to reach the best decision, weather forecasts are not always 100% accurate, and conditions can change quickly. I also recognize that families may not always agree with a weather-related decision. If you feel conditions are unsafe for your child, you may keep your child home or pick them up from school early.

Late Starts
Late starts are called for two primary reasons: to allow additional time for road crews to clear snow and improve road conditions, and to give us more time to evaluate the weather forecast. On a normal school day, our bus drivers are ready to begin their routes around 6:30–6:45 a.m. With a 10:30 a.m. late start, drivers can delay their routes until approximately 8:30–8:45 a.m., allowing additional daylight for road crews to begin plowing and improving conditions on both city and rural roads. A late start also gives us additional time to monitor the weather and determine whether conditions are expected to improve enough to safely begin school at 10:30 a.m. If conditions are not improving or the forecast indicates that travel will remain unsafe, we may change the decision to a school cancellation. I understand that late starts can create challenges for families, particularly when arranging childcare. Please know that the additional time is used to evaluate conditions and make the safest decision possible for our students and staff.

Early Dismissals
Early dismissals during the winter months are primarily used to help students get home safely during daylight hours before weather conditions deteriorate. Depending on the circumstances, we may dismiss school at 12:30, 1:30, or 2:30 p.m. The dismissal time depends on the forecast, current road conditions, and how quickly we anticipate conditions may worsen. Our goal is to get students home safely before snow, wind, or other hazardous conditions make travel more difficult.

School Cancellations
School may be canceled when road conditions make it too difficult to transport students safely on our buses, even if roads within Watertown appear to be in better condition. We may also cancel school when the forecast indicates that weather conditions are expected to worsen throughout the day. The decision-making process often begins around 4:30–5:00 a.m. Several of us evaluate road conditions in town and in the surrounding rural areas. We also consult with meteorologists in Aberdeen regarding expected snowfall, wind speeds, and other weather conditions. We use the information available to us to make the best decision possible. Unfortunately, weather predictions are not always exact, and conditions may change after a decision has been announced.

What About Extremely Cold Temperatures?
Cold temperatures are another concern during northeastern South Dakota winters. Our district generally does not cancel school solely because of cold temperatures unless the actual air temperature reaches approximately 25–30 degrees below zero. Our school buses are equipped with heating systems and can operate safely in very cold conditions, provided temperatures remain within the range considered manageable for our equipment. Wind chill is an important consideration for students outdoors, but it does not affect the mechanical operation of our buses in the same way it affects people. We also keep our school buildings open for students on extremely cold days. Students will not be expected to wait outside in bus lines or spend time on playgrounds in those conditions. I recognize that media coverage sometimes creates the impression that schools should close whenever temperatures become extremely cold. However, northeastern South Dakota is accustomed to extended periods of winter weather, and canceling school for every day of extreme cold could mean missing two or three weeks of school over the winter. That is why we use the actual air temperature, along with other safety considerations, when making these decisions. If your child walks to school, please plan ahead during periods of extreme cold. Consider reaching out to neighbors or friends to arrange a ride. Most importantly, please ensure your child is dressed appropriately for winter weather, including a warm coat, hat, mittens or gloves, and appropriate boots. If you believe the weather is too dangerous for your child, you may keep your child home. We will never ask you to disregard your concerns about your child's safety.

How Will Families Be Notified?
We make every effort, barring technical difficulties, to communicate weather-related decisions as quickly as possible through local television stations, radio stations, the district website, and phone notifications. To help ensure you receive these important announcements, please make sure your contact information is current with your child's school. Updated phone numbers and other contact information are essential when weather-related decisions must be communicated early in the morning or on short notice. Families are also encouraged to follow the Watertown School District's website and Facebook page for district announcements and updates.

Our Commitment to Student Safety
I hope this information helps families better understand the thought process behind late starts, early dismissals, school cancellations, and decisions involving extreme cold. These decisions are never taken lightly. We understand the impact they have on students, parents, staff, and the community, and we do our best to balance the need for students to attend school with the responsibility to keep them safe. As your Superintendent, I take that responsibility very seriously. Thank you for your understanding, cooperation, and continued support as we navigate another South Dakota winter together.