



LEARNING & SUCCESS FOR ALL

WEATHER CANCELLATIONS & DELAYS:

Be sure to update your contact information in Infinite Campus to receive weather-related school phone messages and texts. If we start late on a Wednesday, we **WILL NOT** dismiss one hour early.

HUMBOLDT Community School District

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE
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www.humboldt.k12.ia.us



@OfficialHCSD



@humboldt_csd



Humboldt Community School District Mease Elementary Early Childhood Learning Center

Preschool Round Up – March 7th
(4 years old by September 15, 2023)
Kindergarten Round Up - March 10th
(5 years old by September 15, 2023)



Call 515-332-3578 to Register for Round Up

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Learning and Success for All

Snow Make Up Days:
March 14th for Preschool Round Up March
17th for Kindergarten Round Up

Message from Superintendent Jim Murray



What a winter! I thought the month of January would never end. I am ready for February and am hopeful the weather won't continue to challenge me with school delays and cancellations. We have had four snow days this year so far. If we make all of them up as scheduled, the students' last day will be Tuesday, May 30.

State legislators passed the private school voucher legislation, and its impact on public education is unknown. In our community, the issue isn't about the quality of education. Elementary students receive an outstanding education at Mease Elementary, Taft Elementary, and St. Mary's Elementary, with whom we have a terrific relationship. All of those schools feed into our public high school and middle school. As with every year, the issue is about funding. Let's hope the legislators budgeted accordingly and don't overpromise and underdeliver regarding future school funding. Soon we'll learn about the amount of State Supplemental Aid, SSA, we receive per child. I am optimistic state legislators will increase it beyond the 2 to 2.5% increase initially proposed when the session began. That won't come close to our budget needs. Like all of our community, we are experiencing challenges with the current inflation rate. Ultimately, we'll be as resourceful as ever when continually improving the quality of education our children receive.

On a fun note, I get to help serve lunch at our buildings every once in a while. I enjoy talking to the students as they move through the line. We have really great kids in our district!

"The Real Deal"

I continue to get great feedback from this portion of the newsletter. Our community members don't want to hear that everything is well, as they know education is a challenging profession.

• Sadly, we've recently lost some important members of our administrative team. We'll need to replace our High School Principal, Dr. Paul Numedahl, and High School Assistant Principal, Abby Horbach. For some administrators like me, Humboldt is a destination. For others, we are fortunate they were a part of our district on their career path. I wish them both well. With every change comes opportunity, and we can bring leaders that will strengthen our district and contribute to our success.

• Our Humboldt School Board met on Monday, January 16. The board did have a difficult decision. When we met last March, anticipated construction costs on the high end were 1.4 million for the Humboldt Middle School four-classroom addition and 2.9 million for the Taft classroom and gym addition for a total of 4.3 million. That was the high-end estimate. Unfortunately, bids came back much higher at 2 million for the Middle School and 3.5 million for Taft Elementary for a total of 5.5 million. We are stretching our 9.7 million bond as far as we can. The board accepted the bid for Taft Elementary. Through my recommendation, the board declined the bid proposals for Humboldt Middle School. We have two other projects waiting for cost estimates, the high school safe entrance/office project and the complex restrooms. When those come in, the board will consider them with the middle school project and then prioritize.



Ryan Fedders Taft Elementary Principal

We are already rounding the corner to begin our final trimester here at Taft at the end of February! Please save the date for an important event that is coming up quickly. Taft/Mease's Literacy Night will be held on Thursday, March 23rd from 4:30-7:00 PM at Taft Elementary. We had a tremendous turnout last spring and are again excited to offer a book fair with free book drawings, food for purchase, and numerous literacy stations for students to participate in. A huge thank you goes out to our PATHS group for all of the behind-the-scenes planning that goes into a night like this!

Toward the end of January, our students completed their mid-year Fastbridge assessments. These screeners are great opportunities to see growth in student academic progress throughout the first half of the year. Overall, our building level proficiency went from 66% to 76% in reading and 74% to 82% in math. An increase in proficiency of 8-10 points in each area is nice growth from a fall-winter testing period. This can be directly attributed to the work that our teaching staff has put in during their PLC meetings on Wednesday afternoons, along with the great instruction that is occurring daily in classrooms. We are excited to share more specifics about this data and other student data at our spring conferences coming up on Tuesday, February 21st and Thursday, February 23rd.

One challenge that we have had over the last few months has been a learning gap that came with a curriculum change. Our beginning of the year data showed that students needed some additional instruction and practice with sight words, so our teams in the lower grade levels met and brainstormed solutions to this. With the support of our instructional and MTSS coaches, a plan was created to systematically teach these words within our K-1 grade span. This is just another example of the teamwork that occurs at the elementary level daily!

We're looking forward to a great second half of the school year! Please continue to contact me at rfedders@humboldt.k12.ia.us or 515-332-3216 with any questions or concerns that you may have.