

THE CARDINAL'S CHIRP



ALMA PUBLIC SCHOOL
PO BOX 170
ALMA, NE 68920



VOL XXXVII, ISSUE NO. 1

SEPTEMBER 2017

FROM THE DESK OF SUPERINTENDENT DAVIS

I would like to welcome back the students, teachers and staff to the new school year. It is great to see all the staff and students back in the hallways again eager to work and learn. The fall activities are off to a good start with practices and all of the sports should be competitive throughout the season. As we begin the school year with activities, Alma Public School encourages good sportsmanship at all activities, home and away. Fans are encouraged to be positive in support of the teams and players and refrain from negative comments directed toward players, coaches and referees throughout the school year.

School Enrollment and the Construction Project:

The 2017-2018 student enrollment is up 18 students from the start of school last year, with 331 K-12 students enrolled. This follows an increase of 29 students last year and 13 new students in the fall of 2015. Currently there are 187 elementary students in grades K-6, and 144 secondary students in grades 7-12. A special welcome to all of our new students and staff joining Alma Public Schools this school year.

As many of you know, the school has been involved in a major renovation of parts of the school that added additional classroom and space to the existing building. The majority of that renovation is complete and teachers moved into the new classrooms the day before school started. The second part of the building project is the construction of the new Ag/shop building to the west of the school. The Ag building was originally slated to be completed by mid-September is now projected to be completed by October 18th. An open house for the entire project will be held shortly after the completion of the Ag building.

2017-2018 Budget:

The 2017-2018-school budget is completed and will be presented at the September 11th School Board meeting. The proposed tax asking is down \$21,912 for and total levy of \$1.015, is down approximately .5¢ from last year's levy of \$1.019972. The levy includes \$0.093 or \$3,290,957 for the General Fund, 6¢ or \$212,319 for the Special Building Fund and 2.5¢ or \$88,466 for the Qualified Capital Purpose Fund. The General Fund is the fund that pays all of the District's expenses associated with running the school. The Special Building Fund is the fund used to make building and ground improvements and repairs and will also be used to pay off the construction project. The Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund is paying for the HVAC and Track improvements that were approved by the Board of Education in 2008 and 2010. The School Districts total valuation decreased from \$354,289,858 to \$353,866,357 or a .12% decrease (-\$423,501). The District had a small increase in State Aid of \$86,913 for a total of \$361,475. The majority of this money comes from the District's option enrollment students.

If you have questions about this year's budget or any other school related items, please contact me at 928-2131 or by email at jon.davis@almacardinals.org.

FROM PRINCIPAL KRONHOFMAN'S DESK

The school year is off to a good start. We have several new students that joined us this year. We have made some changes to the school building by remodeling the shop into new music rooms and the old music room into two elementary classrooms. Our new shop/ag building is still being constructed. We will host an open house on completion of the shop/ag building to let the public see it and the new remodeling of our current school building.

We put our student hand book on our school website and on the student computers. As the school year begins, please go over the student handbook with your child/children. This is a good way to become familiar with school policies and procedures. Pay special attention to absences, tardies, and our activity policies. Please note that now is the perfect time for your family to set guidelines for home study time. We recommend that your child/children have a set study time Sunday-Thursday. Most of them will have homework nightly and need to spend 30-60 minutes studying. Let us all work together to make this a great school year for you, students, and staff. Your support and involvement are appreciated and encouraged. Together, we can make 2017 – 2018 a super year!

The school looks great once again thanks to Bruce, Rick, Cindy and Jeff. They take great pride in getting our school ready for the beginning of the school year. [CON'D ON PAGE 6]

GET TO KNOW YOUR SCHOOL COUNSELOR, MRS. BISKUP

Name: Brittney Biskup

Job Title: K-12 School Counselor

Years in Alma: 17

Previous Positions: 10 years teaching Elementary at Alma, 10 years as the Summer Honors Program Counselor

Education: Bachelor's in Elementary and Early Childhood Education, Master's Degree in Secondary School Counseling, Master's Degree in Gifted Education

Describe your Primary role at APS: My primary role is to serve APS student in supporting their social and emotional needs. I also support students in their academic success as well as teach Skills for Growing to students in grades K-6. During these classes I teach skills that help children develop successful habits for interacting with others and becoming successful in the classroom. I teach Senior Survey which is a class for students considering their options after high school, specifically college as a post-high school option. In this class we do career exploration, college applications, scholarships, and some fun projects.

What other capacities do you serve the kids at APS? (What services do you offer?) I provide individual counseling for students struggling with issues at home or school. Teachers, parents, other students, or the individual themselves may refer a student for counseling. I'm happy to meet with any student who feels they could benefit from talking through problems and working towards solutions. I can help students plan for their future and explore career and college possibilities. I serve on many committees and help coach track.

What my job is not: While I can provide Brief Solution-Focused Therapy, I am not a Licensed Mental Health Practitioner (LMHP). I am able to meet with your child for short (around 20 min) counseling and problem solving sessions to help them manage feelings they may be dealing with inside or outside of school, specifically those that are impeding their learning in any way. However, if a student has deeper rooted, long term or specific mental health issues, I would be happy to help refer you to a LMHP in our area that can provide specific therapy that the school cannot provide.

When might a parent contact me? Parents can contact me anytime they are concerned about the mental or social well-being of their child. They may also contact me if they have academic concerns for their child (however specific concerns should first be addressed with your child's teacher when possible.) Senior parents may have many questions about college, financial aid, scholarships, etc. Please feel free to email me or call me at any time! This is definitely a time I would want to answer any questions as they arise as sending your child off to college is a team effort!

When might I contact a parent? I may be contacting you if I have specific concerns about your child's behavior, social or emotional interactions, or your child's academic performance.

What is your passion in education? I am a helper and a problem solver. I like to help students make changes or solve problems to become their best self. My favorite thing is when a student who has left our school (graduated or moved) contacts me. It assures me that I've made a connection with that kid that they may want to share a success or trust me with a concern. For that reason, helping seniors prepare for their future is my favorite part of the job. I get to know them all pretty well during their final year of school!

Outside of school, how do you like to spend your time? I'm the mother to three kids- Linden (7th grade), Tucker (4th grade), and Layne (Pre-K). I spend a lot of time running them to activities. I love to travel and Disneyland is my Happy Place!

Other information parents and students may want to know about you?

I head up our After School Study Hall (ASSH) program for students in grades 7-12. This program runs Tues. and Thurs. from 3:40-4:30 and students who are failing classes may be required to attend. If you wish to have your child included in ASSH please email me or call me at school.

GET TO KNOW YOUR SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST, MRS. SCHMIDT

Name: Lynse Schmidt

Job Title: School Psychologist

Years in Alma: 5 years as the school psychologist for Alma Public Schools

Previous Position: 9 years as the school psychologist for McCook Public Schools

Education: Bachelor Degree from Creighton University in Psychology (2000)

Educational Specialist Degree in School Psychology from University of Nebraska at Kearney (2003), Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction with the focus in Dyslexia from Southern New Hampshire University (2017)

Describe your Primary role at APS: I am a diagnostician and interventionist. My primary role at APS is the evaluation and reevaluation of students for special education services. Students who receive special education services must be reevaluated every three years to determine if they continue to qualify for special education. If a parent or teacher suspects a child of having a disability, the child must have an evaluation to determine if they meet the criteria for disability. School psychologists are the only staff who can perform intelligence testing, which is a part of the special education process. I also assist teachers, parents, and students with behavior plans. If a student is struggling behaviorally in school, I can help with developing behavior plans. I also teach reading groups and reading interventions.

What other capacities do you serve the kids at APS? I teach small groups of students Social Thinking skills. Social Thinking skills help kids figure out what other people may be thinking and feel. These skills lead to better social interactions.

What my job is not: I am not a licensed mental health counselor. If a student requires counseling services, they will be referred to a licensed mental health counselor. I cannot diagnosis children with medical conditions. If you suspect that your child has Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), I provide you with information about ADHD. I cannot prescribe medication. I can provide you with information if you have questions or concerns.

When might a parent contact me? If you suspect that your child may have a learning disability, you should contact me. If you have concerns about your child's academic or behavior in the classroom, you can contact me. If you have concerns about your child's social interaction, then you can contact me.

When might I contact a parent? I may contact a parent if the school has concerns about your child's academic or behavior. I may contact a parent if your child would benefit from participating in Social Thinking groups.

What is your passion in education? My passion in education is reading disabilities, otherwise known as dyslexia. I was so passionate about knowing more about reading disabilities; I completed a Master's degree with the focus in Dyslexia. The Curriculum and Instruction with the focus in Dyslexia program through Southern New Hampshire University was the only program with the focused on dyslexia.

Outside of school, how do you like to spend your time? I am the mother of three boys: Austin (11), Cael (8), and Kaden (5). I love antiquing and refurbishing projects. I love to travel. I read a lot.

Other information parents and students may want to know about you? In addition to becoming the school psychologist, I am also the coordinator of the TeamMates mentoring program. I am passionate about the impact that mentoring has on student's lives. Parents may hear from me through the TeamMates program.

CHOIR AND BAND STUDENTS GET A NEW MUSIC ROOM

Mr. Ritter was excited to welcome 47 students in grades 9-12 to the high school music department this fall. The Choir has 38 students and 31 students are in the band. This year there are no 8th grade students in with the high school band as there has been for the past four years. He also welcomed students into the re-formed jr. high band. Band is the only "optional" class for jr. high students. This year, 35 of the 47 students in the jr. high are enrolled in band.

All the students are excited to be in the new music room and are looking forward to carrying on the tradition of musical excellence that has been passed on to them by former students. [Continued on Page 4]

[BAND from Page 3]

Students in the high school band

are: Matthew Bell, Joel Brown, Diego Campos Lendinez, Karri Christensen, Colton Dahlgren, Carter Davis, David Ehrke, Maddie Ehrke, Mitchell Gehrig, Christian Hansen, Ashlee Hauver, Kyle Johnson, Kelsey Kermmoade, Kayla Kindler, Michelle Lujan, Emily Malone, Peyton McQuay, Caitlyn Menze, Nova Monk, Caden Moore, Ali Moulton, Sammy Moulton, Bonnie Nelson, Marcus Pineda, Sadie Ritter, Ehren Smolik, Emma Smolik, Frankie Sperry, Alina Stenka, Colton Stephens, Haylee Wing

Students in the high school choir

are: Jarod Asche, Tessa Bach, Erica Barwick, Matthew Bell, Joel Brown, Trevor Bruhn, Diego Campos Lendinez, Abi Cevera, Karri Christensen, Colton Dahlgren, Hunter Dahlgren, David Ehrke, Joseph Felix, Christen Hansen, Dakota Hughes, Kyle Johnson, Kelsey Kermmoade, Kaleb Kindler, Kayla Kindler, Kortnie Lennemann, Vladyslava Lobachevska, Michelle Lujan, Emily Malone, Peyton McQuay, Caitlyn Menze, Nova Monk, Caden Moore, Ali Moulton, Sami Moulton, Sadie Ritter, Colin Rourke, Ehren Smolik, Emma Smolik, Shiann Spady, Alina Stenka, Alissa Vlach, Abbi Waldo, Tiffany Wells

Students in the jr. high band are:

Kaylee Baker, Linden Biskup, Lilli Brown, Ryan Brugh, Weston Christensen, Sage Dieter, Sadie Dietz, Jonah Felix, Elliott Fletcher, Adam Gesick, Wyatt Hammond, Peyton Herrick, Nakayla Hock, Natasha Hock, Jillian Holmberg, Lance Johnson, Tessa Johnson, Cyrus Jordan, Ryan Kermmoade, Madison Korman, Sarah Kreutzer, Caleb Malone, Grant McQuay, Garrett Molzahn, Addison Neal, Jessica Pfeil, Kathryn Prickett, Delaney Seyler, Kendall Stemper, Carlee Stuhmer, Gage Thulin, Torrance Tischner, Jack Waldo, Alexis Wolfe, Madison Wolfe

--Mr. Ritter

FOCUS ON ABSTRACT ART IN ART CLASSES

Welcome back to school! Students in the art room are off to a great start. Most of the K-12 art classes are investigating the ins and outs of abstract art. You may wonder why we are kicking the year off with the study of abstract. Albert Einstein said, "Imagination is more important than knowledge." I believe Einstein had a valid point. Abstract art is an obvious way to expand the imagination as abstraction requires the creator to invent something never before experienced.

Many of the Nebraska Art Standards are based on the premise of strengthening the imagination of our students. It has been my experience that a well thought out abstract work allows students to rely on and strengthen their own abilities to imagine and create original works.

Student imagination is strengthened through the process of abstraction by encouraging the analysis of multiple ideas and materials. Through the study of abstraction, unexpected problems arise in student work. These unexpected situations create the opportunity for increased student investigation of "plan and refine" until the student secures a successful outcome. The student also improves communication skills by developing a personal voice through visual expression of an original work.

The student work will soon be on display throughout the hallways at the school. Please make sure to take a stroll through the halls when you are visiting our facility.

--Mrs. Ritter

VOLLEYBALL TEAM ADOPTS 'DO IT BETTER' THEME

The Alma volleyball team has a new motto this year and it pulls from the heartache endured during last year's tough defeat to Ansley-Litchfield in the District Finals. The 2017 motto of "Do It Better" has one word added to it from last year's "Do It" phrase. Last year the team was so close to achieving the goal of making it to Lincoln, and by "doing it better" this year, hopefully, we will get the job done.

The volleyball team had a great opportunity this preseason to play at the Heartland Events Center (previous host of the state volleyball championships) as we were invited to play in the Bill Marshall Volleyball Classic on Friday, August 25. The preseason tournament does not count against the team record, but provides each team with a jamboree triangular to ease into the season. The girls all received a team picture, team bag, and entrance into the state fair. This provided our girls with a "state tournament" like atmosphere that prepares them for the 2017 season. Our first official regular season game is August 31 in Alma where we take on the Vikings of Bertrand Community Schools and the Trojans from Cambridge Public Schools. Both teams will be formidable opponents, so come support the ladies in kicking off the season.

The 16-member team includes:

Seniors: Maddie Brugh, Jadyn Heckenlively, Emma Smolik. Juniors: Maloree Graf, Dakota Hughes, Kayla Kindler, Kelsey Kermmoade, Alissa Vlach,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

VOLLEYBALL FROM PAGE 4

Abby Waldo, Tiffany Wells. Sophomores: Kaitlin Cook, Shiann Spady. Freshmen: Karri Christensen, Maddie Ehrke, Michelle Lujan, Haylee Wing.

Coaches: Marcus Ehrke, Shelbea Ehrke, and Jenna Christensen
Managers: Carlee Stuhmer, Katy Prickett, Delaney Seyler, Saryn Prickett

PLEASE NOTE!

STAMFORD PORK DAYS

PARADE IS

SEPTEMBER 23!

(The School Calendar has the wrong date posted)

MIDDLE SCHOOL CREATED IN REMODELED AREA OF THE BUILDING

The 4th-6th Grade students were welcomed to the 2017-2018 school year in a new part of the building. A “middle school” concept has been implemented for this age of student at Alma Public School. Four teachers comprise the make-up of the core curriculum: Nora Christensen (Science), Ben Ellis (Reading), Alissa Hoxmeier (Social Studies), Marty Wolfe (Math).

Each student has a homeroom, so teachers can help guide them in their studies and keep them on track during the school year. The students have adjusted to the change quite well. They are challenged to stay organized by keeping track of their schedule and making sure they have all supplies necessary for each class as they move throughout the day.

The students will tell you that the most exciting change is that they each have a locker. It makes them feel so grown up! An open house will be held when the construction project is complete. We can't wait to show off all the great things happening at Alma Public School! --Mrs. Wolfe

CLASS OFFICERS FOR 2017-18

Class of 2018

President: David Ehrke
V. Pres: Hallie Prickett
Sec: Madalyn Brugh
Treas: Carson Wolfe
StuCo: Tana Eddy, Cooper Wright

Class of 2019

President: Abigail Waldo
V. Pres: Jackson McKenzie
Sec: Kelsey Kermmoade
Treas: Kayla Kindler
StuCo: Tiffany Wells, Tanner Kauk

Class of 2020

President: Abby Cervera
V. Pres: Ethan Baker
Sec: Bonnie Nelson
Treas: Isaac McCurdy
StuCo: Joel Brown, Caitlyn Menze

Class of 2021

President: Teagan White
V. Pres: Haylee Wing
Sec: A.J. Russell
Treas: Nigel Hadley
StuCo: Ehren Smolik, Jacob Sell

Class of 2022

President: Jonah Felix
V. Pres: Carlee Stuhmer
Sec: Jessica Pfeil
Treas: Elliot Fletcher

Class of 2023

President: Jack Waldo
V. Pres: Ryan Brugh
Sec: Ryan Kermmoade
Treas: Wyatt Hammond

Student Council

President: Carson Wolfe
V. Pres: Cooper Wright
Sec/Treas: Madalyn Brugh
Music Rep: Sadie Ritter
(All other Student Council Members are mentioned in class or as officer)

MAHALEK WINS SOCIAL STUDIES AWARD

Alma Social Studies teacher Chris Mahalek received the Nebraska State Council for the Social Studies 3rd Congressional District Outstanding Teacher Award on June 28, 2017. The awards ceremony took place at MONA in Kearney, and Harris Payne, the Social Studies Director of the Nebraska Department of Education, presented Mr. Mahalek the award.

Mahalek was nominated for the award by Lori Broady, a Social Studies teacher from Johnson-Brock High School. Ms. Broady teaches a class for high school teachers called “We the People.” The class corresponds with a textbook that Mahalek uses in his senior Government classes. In her nomination letter, Broady praised Mahalek for his innovative ways of reaching students and his involvement in many Alma Public School activities.

--Mrs. Cox

If anyone is interested in volunteering to run the clock, keep the books, or help take tickets for any volleyball, football, and/or basketball games, please call the school (928-2131) and talk to Mr. Krohnofman. We really appreciate those people that are able to take the time to help. Thank You, in advance, for your cooperation.

[KRONHOFMAN PAGE 1]

If you see them, thank them for keeping our school looking great.

In an effort to make attending sporting events at a reasonable cost the price of a year-long pass has stayed the same. The cost for a family pass is \$80, a single adult \$40 and a student pass is \$20 for the entire year. Note that a family pass is intended to be for Alma elementary and high school students and their parents. College students will need to purchase a single adult pass. These passes are good for all Alma home events except Conference or District tournaments. You may stop at the office to purchase these passes. The regular admission prices have also stayed the same at \$4.00 for adults and \$3.00 for children.

Sportsmanship

The Athletic Booster Club hosted the annual hamburger feed and we held our first Pep Rally. The Alma students are looking forward to the beginning of fall activities and with these activities come responsibilities. Any student involved in activities need to maintain their grades, behavior and sportsmanship during all activities. Alma Public School believes in and promotes positive behaviors at ALL activities. Sportsmanship is an issue that the NSAA has promoted strongly over the past 8 years. It has become an expectation for all not just students. You as parents/patrons can model positive behaviors so that we can maintain our reputation as being a school that has tremendous class. All of us, including myself, have gotten caught up in the moment or the excitement of a game. No one likes to lose. During that time, it is easy to become angry at officials, team's players, coaches, and parents. We then may say or do things we would never think of doing or saying if not at the ballgame. Sometimes, it seems winning or losing is more important to the spectators than it is to the athletes. The student-athletes know if they have done their best and still lose, the world will not end. This does not mean the student athletes don't want to win; it means they understand it's only a game, not a life or death situation. These young student-athletes recover much more quickly from a big win or a disheartening loss than any of us adults. Everyone involved is human. Officials make mistakes, coaches make mistakes, players make mistakes, spectators make mistakes, but no one makes mistakes on purpose. Let's work to help support our teams in a more positive manner this year. A few basic rules to follow that will make this sport's season more enjoyable for everyone include: 1. Enjoy yourself and encourage enjoyment for others. 2. Don't criticize athletes. 3. Don't use profanity. 4. Exhibit respect for officials. Let's make this a year to remember in a positive way. Thank you for your support!