



EAGLE UPDATE







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January, 2008

DATES TO REMEMBER

-  Jan. 3
SCHOOL RESUMES
-  Jan. 5
Elgin High Wrestling Tourney
10:00 a.m.
-  Jan. 8
Post Prom Soup Supper during basketball games
-  Jan. 9
School Board mtg.
7:30 in ITV room.
-  Jan 12.
FCCLA Winter Formal 8:00 p.m.
-  Jan. 16
Late Start
10:00 a.m.

Engineering Students Design Catapult System



Tad Henkenius and Shane Voborny work on construction of the catapult.

We are ending our semester in Introduction to Engineering with one final project, the Catapult. Students were tasked to build a system to launch an object as far as possible given certain constraints. They've learned that constraints can cause headaches and difficulties though they also provide an opportunity to stretch the imagination. In any real-life project there are always limits imposed, whether they are financial, timelines, or specific requirements.

When a team encountered a roadblock they adapted and redesigned. One specific requirement is launching a raw egg without breaking it. Part of the project includes designing a protective device for the egg. So far they've risen to the challenge and we'll be launching them right after semester break.

We've come a long way this semester, learning and applying skills including teamwork, the design process, and project management. Next semester we'll start on the CAD (Computer Aided Design) class, which most are really excited about thanks to the recent purchase of a plasma cutter system they'll get to use.



KNEN 94.7 QUIZ BOWL ---- JANUARY 14TH AT 9:30 A.M. VS. MADISON HIGH

THE IMPORTANCE OF REGULAR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

It's a fact that students who attend school regularly learn more and are more successful in school than students who do not. Parents who make regular school attendance a priority also are helping their children learn to accept responsibility. And that's an important lesson for a successful life.

Attendance patterns are formed early in life. Children who develop good attendance habits in the early grades will be more likely to continue them throughout their school career. That's important, because students who miss school miss out on carefully planned sequences of instruction. They miss out on active learning experiences and class participation. They miss out on the opportunity to ask questions. They are more likely to fall behind. And they are more likely to drop out.

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO:

1. Let your child know that you expect her to attend school every day. Explain that, just as you have a job, it's her job to go to school and learn.
2. Set a time for doing homework each evening and a time for going to bed. Unfinished homework and too little sleep are common reasons why parents hear the words, "I don't feel good," on school mornings.
3. Get involved with your child's school. By getting involved, you are showing your child that school is important to you and that it should be important to her also.

EHS STUDENT HONORED



Jennifer Bush

Jennifer Bush, an Elgin Public School student, has been chosen as a "Student of the Month" by the Norfolk Elks Lodge. Each month during the school year, two youths are selected based on nominations received by the Lodge. Judging criteria is based on multiple achievement in the areas of character, leadership, service, citizenship and scholastics.

Jennifer is the daughter of Dwight and Esther Bush. She has served her class as president since her freshman year and has been the FCCLA president the past two years. This summer, she was a Cornhusker Girls State delegate. She was inducted into the National Honor Society in 2006, and is involved with the Medical Explorers.

Jennifer topped the 2007 Nebraska American Legion Auxiliary Americanism Essay competition. She has lettered in band, choir, speech, one-act play and academics.

Congratulations, Jennifer!



ACTIVITIES CALENDAR ON WEBSITE

Do you want to know what time the concert starts or if the ballgames have been postponed?

Check out the *Activities Calendar* on our website, www.elgineagles.org. This easy-to-use tool:

- provides up-to-date school activities and events
- allows you to view and print a daily, weekly or monthly list of calendar events
- includes a search option to find a specific event sends you e-mail reminders for events you select

*Small things, done with great love,
bring joy and peace.*

Mother Teresa
Nobel Peace Prize winner



Noteworthy News

By Mrs. Deb Jones

Many years ago, Hastings College department of music started an honor festival for high school musicians. Now it is deemed "Nebraska's First" and includes an orchestra, band and honor choir. The selection process is quite challenging. More than 300 auditionees at 17 sites around the state sang a solo for the audition panel. Some wonderfully talented students will be disappointed and have to stay home according to the chairperson of the audition process.

But Elgin has someone to be proud of - Nathan Niewohner will be singing Bass 1 this year in the Hastings Choir. He is a junior and the son of Steve and Jane Niewohner. He will begin rehearsals Thursday, January 31 and the concert performance will be Saturday, February 2, 2008. It will be a memorable and valuable experience for Nathan.

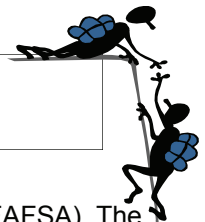
Congratulations on a wonderful honor!

UNK CHOIRS ANNOUNCED!

Elgin Public will have six participants in the UNK at Kearney Choir Festival this year. Nathan Niewohner grabbed top honors by being chosen for the Honor Choir. Festival Choir members include Jennifer Bush, Mikayla Hoffart, Jonathan Gunderson and Gabe Wiegand. Jenna Schindler will be representing Elgin in the Women's Choir. The choirs will rehearse during the day and give a concert performance in the Health & Sports Center. This will take place on Monday, January 28, 2008 at 6:30 p.m. Congratulations to all of you on a job well done. We are proud that you will be representing Elgin Public Schools in Kearney.

Counselor's Corner

by Mrs. Barb Bode



Preparation key to applying for financial aid

Preparation is the key to successfully completing and filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA is the application for state, federal and college-specific financial aid. Even if you don't think you'll qualify for need-based financial aid, you should complete the FAFSA to qualify for low-interest student and parent loans.

Follow these steps to complete the FAFSA and the financial aid process:

- **Ask your college(s) for their FAFSA priority filing date.** Because some types of financial aid are awarded first-come, first-served, it's important that you submit the FAFSA before that date.
- **Request a Personal Identification Number (PIN)** for you and a parent at www.pin.ed.gov. The PIN is your signature for the online FAFSA.
- **Complete tax returns early** as the FAFSA requires current tax information.
- **Gather these student and parent items:**
 - 2007 federal tax returns and, if applicable, Schedule K-1 (Form 1065)
 - 2007 W-2 forms
 - Student's driver's license number
 - Social Security numbers
 - Birth dates
 - Date parents were married, separated, divorced or widowed
 - Current cash, savings and checking account balances
 - Current investment values (stocks, bond, mutual funds, CDs, etc.) excluding retirement accounts
 - Value of business (if more than 100 employees)
 - Value of investment farm (Do not include the value of a family farm that you or your parents live on and operate.)
 - 2007 child support (paid and/or received)
 - 2007 ADC/TANF welfare benefits
 - 2007 Social Security payments received from SSI or SSDI
 - 2007 Workers compensation
 - Other untaxed income in 2007 such as veteran's benefits, housing/food/ living allowances for military and clergy
 - Alien Registration Number for eligible non-citizens
- **Be prepared to answer these FAFSA questions which relate to grant eligibility:**
 1. Did your student or anyone in the household receive any of the following federal benefits?
 - Supplemental Security Income
 - Food Stamps
 - TANF
 - Free or Reduced Price Lunch
 - WIC
 2. Did your student complete at least two Advanced Placement courses with a passing test score of 3 or higher?
 3. Did your student complete and pass the following high school courses?
 - 4 years of English
 - 3 years of math (Algebra I and above)
 - 3 years of science (2 of 3: Biology, Chemistry, Physics)
 - 3 years of social studies
 - 1 year of a language other than English
- **Complete and file the FAFSA electronically** at www.fafsa.ed.gov before your college's priority date.
- **Expect a Student Aid Report** acknowledging that your form was processed.
- **Expect Financial Aid Award Letters** in the spring from the colleges you listed on your FAFSA detailing the assistance they're offering (could be combination of scholarships, grants, work-study and student loans).
- **Apply for student and parent loans (if necessary)** in the summer through your college.
- **Check out these free FAFSA tools and resources**

Visit the "Completing the FAFSA" section at www.educationquest.org where you'll find:

- **FAFSA Checklist** – provides a complete list of items you need to gather before you complete the FAFSA
- **College Funding Estimator** – estimates your FAFSA results
- **FAFSA Tutorial** – provides user-friendly clarification of each FAFSA question
- **Financial Aid Video** – explains the types of financial aid and how to apply

For free personal help with FAFSA completion, call the EducationQuest location nearest you to make an appointment. Contact the Kearney office at 308-234-6310 or 800-666-3721; Lincoln at 402-475-5222 or 800-303-3745; or Omaha at 402-391-4033 or 888-357-6300.

January "To Do" List

Seniors:

- ___ Ask your college(s) for their FAFSA priority date.
- ___ Attend the [Financial Aid Program](#) at your school or in your area.
- ___ Apply for FAFSA Personal Identification Numbers at www.pin.ed.gov.
- ___ Make a FAFSA appointment at EducationQuest if you need help.
- ___ Complete taxes early.
- ___ Continue to apply for scholarships.

Juniors:

- ___ Attend the [Financial Aid Program](#) at your school or in your area.
- ___ Register by January 4 for the February 9 ACT
- ___ Continue to research colleges.
- ___ Start setting up college visits.

2007 CLASS D-2 STATE RUNNER-UP

The Elgin Football team completed a very successful season. The Eagles led by Seniors Matt Anderson and Jonathan Gunderson finished the season 12-1, D-2 State Runner-up. The entire team spent countless hours preparing for the 2007 season, which turned out to be one of the best seasons in school history.

This year's team was not about individual efforts. Each game a different player contributed to the success of the game. That can be seen in our stats and records broken. The team broke 7 team records and only one individual record. This year's team is an example of what hard work and dedication can produce.

Thank all to all the athletes, parents and student body for supporting our team through the entire season. Your excitement for the game helped make this a fantastic year to be an Eagle!

Game Scores for 2007

Elgin 52 – 14 Verdigre
Elgin 70 – 22 Shelby
Elgin 47 – 6 Cedar Rapids
Elgin 50 – 14 Prague
Elgin 22 – 8 Dodge
Elgin 44 – 14 Saint Edward
Elgin 44 – 0 Lindsay Holy Family
Elgin 69 – 6 Rising City

District Awards

First Team

Tad Henkenius O Line
Nathan Niewohner D-line
Brett Mahnke D-line
Jonathan Gunderson L-Backer
Andrew Bauer Def Back
Nathan Niewohner Kicker

Second Team

Andrew Bauer QB
Matt Anderson RB
Justin Kallhoff O Line
Austin Stamp Line Backer
Chris DeWald Punter

Honorable Mention - Tyler Johnson



State Playoffs

Elgin 54 – 6 Parkview Christian
Elgin 66 – 28 Allen
Elgin 28 – 20 Ewing
Elgin 58 – 22 Dodge
Elgin 24 – 28 Chambers

Team Awards

Defensive MVP Tad Henkenius
Offensive MVP Andrew Bauer

KWPN Award for Outstanding play in the State Semi Finals
KEXL Star Athlete of the Week State Semi Final Game

Lincoln Journal Star

First Team Andrew Bauer and Jonathan Gunderson
Honorable Mention Tad Henkenius, Matt Anderson

Omaha World Herald

First Team Andrew Bauer and Jonathan Gunderson
Honorable Mention Tad Henkenius

Huskerland Prep Report

First Team - Andrew Bauer and Jonathan Gunderson
(Andrew Bauer is the co captain with Jason Cameron)

Eagle Lifters of the Year

Tad Henkenius
Jeff Bush
Brett Mahnke
Matt Anderson
Jonathan Gunderson

Eric Powell
Nathan Niewohner
Tyler Johnson
Justin Kallhoff
Nathan Anderson
Tyler Reestman

Eagle Lifter of the Year - Tad Henkenius

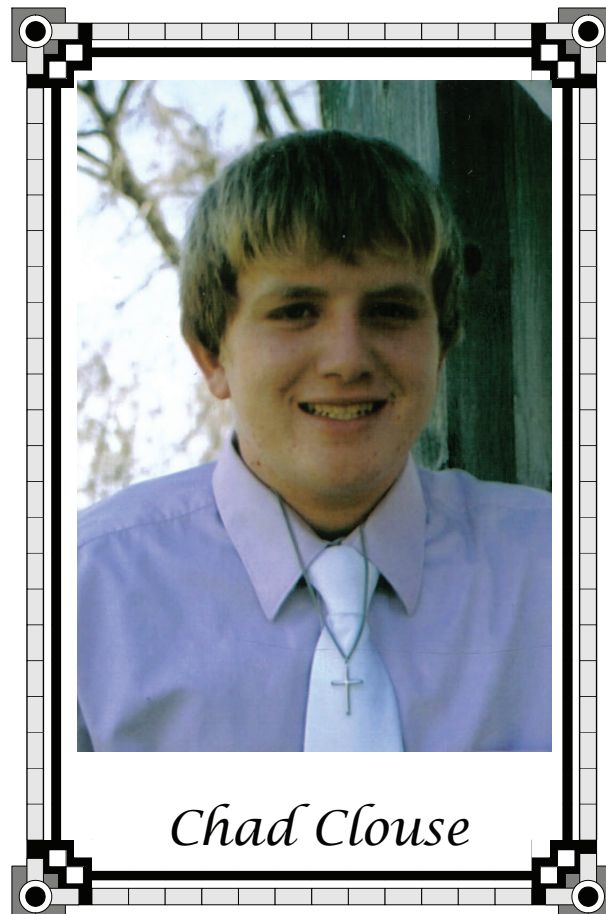


Senior Interviews . . .



Full Name: Allie Victoria Schiltmeyer
Parents: Dave Schiltmeyer and Rhea Schiltmeyer
Sisters: Karlie, Maddie, Baylie
Pets: Cloie (dog) Louie (cat)
Favorite School Subject: sociology
Favorite Teacher: Mr. Simpson
School activities: FFA, FCCLA, track, basketball, Jr. Right to Life, yearbook, speech
Greatest Honor during school: Honor roll & lots of art awards
Favorite School Activity: FFA because it is fun meeting new people
Most educational experience: going to FCCLA cluster
Most inspirational person: Karen Lechtenberg
Favorite color: green
Favorite thing to do in spare time: take pictures and alter them on the computer
Pet peeve: People chewing with their mouth open
If I could go back in time I would go: The 1960's - just to see what it was like.
Favorite saying: Always be yourself, because the people who mind don't matter, and the people who matter don't mind.
Something most people don't know about me: I don't watch TV
Favorite movie: Under the Tuscan Sun
Dream car: Anything's better than the one I have now!
Favorite Food: bologna & Doritos sandwich
Favorite School lunch: none
Favorite Pop: Dr. Pepper
Favorite TV Show: I don't watch TV except for LA Ink
Favorite type of music: Indie Rock
Future plans after graduation: Go to Northeast & begin my art degree and then finish it in Omaha at the Creative Center

Full Name: Chad Michael Clouse
Parents: Jerry & Kate Clouse
Brothers: Brad, JR, Casey, Ricky
Sisters: Anna
Pets: dogs
Favorite School Subject: History
Favorite Teacher: Mr. Jones
School activities: football, basketball
Greatest Honor during school: lettered in Art 3 years
Favorite School Activity: basketball because I like playing it.
Most educational experience: County Government Day
Most inspirational person: my family
Favorite color: baby blue and pink
Favorite thing to do in spare time: fish, hunt, play catch with friends, drive around
Pet peeve: people that say stupid things
If I could go back in time I would go: Sept. 15, 2007 to talk to Andrew Spaulding for one more good time.
Favorite saying: I go beep-beep if you go beep-beep.
Something most people don't know about me: I am funny
Favorite movie: Grandma's Boy
Dream car: 69 Shelby Mustang GT 500
Favorite Food: Pizza Hut
Favorite School lunch: pizza
Favorite Pop: Dr. Pepper
Favorite TV Show: South Park
Favorite type of music: country or rock
Future plans after graduation: go to college



Senior Interviews . . .



Alisha Anderson

Full Name: Alisha Kay Anderson
Parents: Bruce & Joanne Anderson
Brothers: Brandon, Nathan, Blake
Favorite School Subject: math & science
Favorite Teacher: Mrs. Walsh & Miss J
School activities: Volleyball, band, choir, basketball, FFA, FCCLA, PALS
Greatest Honor during school: NVC Honorable mention volleyball, NVC 2nd team basketball
Favorite School Activity: Sport games, because I love competing and basketball is my favorite sport
Most educational experience: going to view the cadaver in Sioux City
Most inspirational person: my parents
Favorite color: pink
Favorite thing to do in spare time: curling up in a blanket and watching movies
If I could go back in time I would go: 1990--I was still in diapers and life was easy.
Favorite saying: How romantic!
Something most people don't know about me: I love & drink a lot of milk
Favorite movie: Love and Basketball
Favorite Food: mashed potatoes and gravy, steak, corn
Favorite School lunch: turkey deli sandwiches
Favorite Pop: fountain Dr. Pepper
Favorite TV Show: Grey's Anatomy
Future plans after graduation: attend UNL and major in a health career

Full Name: Jenna Marie Schindler
Parents: Glen & Louise Schindler
Brothers: Josh, Jesse, Jordan
Pets: 3 dogs, a wide variety of cats, and a raccoon named Roxy
Favorite School Subject: Child Development
Favorite Teacher: Mrs. Walsh
School activities: Volleyball, Basketball, Dance, FCCLA, FFA, PALS, National Honor Society, Class Officer, Band, Choir
Greatest Honor during school: being inducted into National Honor Society
Favorite School Activity: Football games because I love the atmosphere
Most educational experience: Going to St. Louis for Cluster my Jr. year
Favorite color: purple
Favorite thing to do in spare time: spending time with friends and family
Pet peeve: people who smack
If I could go back in time I would go: back to 5th grade when I tragically fell running around the elementary building. I would try to avoid that situation so I wouldn't have this hideous scar on my knee.
Favorite saying: We all take different paths in life, but no matter where we go, we take a little of each other everywhere.
Something most people don't know about me: I have a scar on my chin from falling down the stairs and cracking my chin open on a wood floor at my babysitters.
Favorite movie: Sweet Home Alabama
Dream car: anything other than the mini van
Favorite Food: mashed potatoes and gravy
Favorite School lunch: cheesy tuna noodles
Favorite Pop: Dr. Pepper
Favorite TV Show: America's Next Top Model
Favorite type of music: anything except Gospel and hick country
Future plans after graduation: attend Wayne State College for 2 years and then transfer to University of NE-Kearney and major in speech pathology.



Jenna Schindler



NEBRASKA PASSES BILL TO REDUCE UNDERAGE DRINKING

On May 30, 2007, the Nebraska Unicameral passed LB 573, a bill to establish a social host liability provision into law that also strengthens the existing keg registration statute.

The social host provision states that people who are killed, injured, or who have sustained property damage as a result of actions by an intoxicated minor can sue the person or business who provided the alcohol or the social host who allowed the minor to consume the alcohol in his/her home or on his/her property. This provision of the law takes effect January 1, 2008



CONCERT WELL ATTENDED

This year's Christmas concert was well attended - thanks to all of you! We

had a very appreciative audience and a wonderful show. The concert band played some well known Christmas songs that are in everyone's hearts. Then it was time for the Pre-school and Kindergarten to sing. They were so excited to perform, they could hardly stand it! They did an outstanding job singing about the presents that Santa would bring. Then the kids had actions to "Santa" that I would challenge you adults to get in the right order!! They had lots of fun learning their songs this year.

The Cadet Band played some traditional Christmas carols in their performance and did a great job - some of them have only played instruments since September. The first - second grades had some solos about the "bad" things that did - they might get "Nuttin' For Christmas". They also had a blast singing a shopping song as some of us are just "Born To Shop"! The High School Choir finished the performances with Santa Claus joining them as they sang "Santa Baby".

The musical this year was "Super Claus". Santa gets hit on the head while fixing the assembly machine and now has amnesia. Everyone is concerned about him. Mrs. Claus gets caught in a blizzard getting Tylenol and the Elves have to find her. Then "Super Claus" saves the day by going out to save her, but hits his head again!! He gets his memory back and all is well at the North Pole - Santa saved Christmas - hooray!!!



FIRST GRADE CHRISTMAS TREES

The First Grade Art class has been busy creating Christmas trees. They began by practicing how to draw a tree with branches going around the tree as opposed to a "cookie cutter" design. They drew their trees on green construction paper with a dark green crayon. After they completed the drawing they cut out their tree and glued it to a red piece of paper.

The students were given a variety of paper punches and colored paper to make ornaments for their trees. They could choose a round punch, two sizes of stars, a bow, a music note or any combination of. After punching out their ornaments the first grade glued them to their tree with a glue stick. A large, yellow star at the top of the tree completed the look. The last step was to take a red crayon and draw a floor under the tree.

A slideshow is available on our website to view their finished products.



WHEN TO HELP WITH HOMEWORK

Parents should be involved with homework when children are in middle school. But not too involved.

Parents who are too involved:

- Hover over their child as he works.
- Get upset at mistakes their child makes.
- Do the work when their child can't
- Believe their child's success or failure confirms their success or failure as a parent.

Being too involved sends kids harmful messages like, "I don't think you're capable of doing this."

Such messages make kids feel guilty and incompetent. And being over-involved keeps kids dependent on you. They come to believe they can't do the work without you.

To ensure you're involved appropriately:

- Provide a private place for your child to study.
- Be less of a participant and more of a consultant to your child.
- Make your interventions brief--a few minutes.
- Suggest your child get help from the teacher.

Source: John Rosemond, Ending the Homework Hassle, 1990 (Andrews and McMeel, 4520 Main St., Kansas City, MO 64111, 10800-943-9831),



ONE-ACT COMPETES SUCCESSFULLY

One-act season has come to a close for the 2007-2008 school year. The EPS one-act team practiced and performed the play *Dinner With the MacGuffins* by Jonthan Rand and Chris Sheppard. The piece was a comedy with dark undertones revolving around James (Jonathan Gunderson) and his realization that his normal home life was anything but. He comes to understand that his entire life has actually occurred on stage and he is only a performer in a play of his life.

NVC acting awards were given to Jennifer Bush and Jeff Bush. The team placed 6th overall. Individual awards at district level were given to Jeff Bush and Jonathan Gunderson. The initial community performance was cancelled due to illness. The reschedule date was also cancelled, this time due to poor weather. The one-act team regrets the lack of community performance. Join us next year for another great play! We would also like to send out a special thank for Darlene Warner for taking over practices and helping the team members learn their lines during my maternity leave!

SENIORS PICTURES NEEDED

Seniors, do you need something to do over Christmas break? How about start going through your family photo albums and find pictures that you wish to have in the senior slideshow! It is again that time of year that I need your photos. I start putting it together right after Christmas. I need the following pictures:

- Baby picture
- Toddler to Pre-school age
- Elementary Picture
- Junior High Picture
- Senior Picture
- Family Picture
- Hobby/Favorite Picture
- Class Pictures – (If anyone has class pictures from Elementary or Junior High)
- Any “FUN” pictures that you might have from any age level
- I also need two more songs for the slide show, please copy the song onto a CD and bring it in also!



I need 7-10 personal pictures from each senior. Please know that your photos don't have to be school pictures. They can be from any setting. They just have to be your favorite! Remember, ALL pictures will be returned to you! If you have any questions please call me at the school! Happy Hunting!!!

Ms. Butterfield

What we are teaches the child far more than what we say, so we must be what we want our children to become.

*Joseph Chilton Pearce
American writer and lecturer*



SIGN-UP FOR NEWS UPDATE

You won't want to be left out in the cold! When the weather changes our plans, we want to make sure you are the first to know.

Sign up for News Update on our website, www.elgineagles.org. On the left side of the front page of our website, click on "Sign up for the News Update". Put in your e-mail address and you will be sent an e-mail. **You must reply to that e-mail in order to be placed on our e-mail list.** Whenever there are postponements or cancellations, an e-mail will be sent with the information.

News Update will also be used to draw attention to new items on our webpage so periodically you will receive an e-mail with headline news in it. (We promise not to flood your e-mail inbox and we won't give out your e-mail address to anyone!)

Sign up today and be sure to tell your friends!

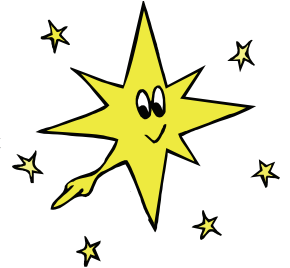


Busy Month For FCCLA

Twelve Elgin FCCLA members and their advisor Mrs. Bode and parent Joann Anderson attended the 2007 FCCLA National Cluster meeting held in Denver, Colorado. Those attending from the Elgin FCCLA chapter were Jenna Schindler, Becki Schindler, Jennifer Bush, Alisha Anderson, Allie Schiltmeyer, Jonathan Gunderson, Gabe Wiegand, Ayli Carrero, Justine Meis, Teri Kittelson, Michelle Bauer, and Jessica Heithoff.

The conference started Friday night with the opening general session, which included the keynote address, by Dr. Adolph Brown III titled "Character Counts & So Do I". Dr. Brown empowered students to think about their everyday actions and reminded them how good character and decisions are critical in every day of our lives.

Saturday morning opened with keynote speaker Jason Dorsey speaking on "The Sky is No Longer the Limit." Jason shared lessons he learned by overcoming social, financial, and geographic obstacles in order to become a bestselling author, award-winning entrepreneur and a featured voice for his generation. That morning also included a presentation given by Ryan "Superman" Moran who spoke on what it means to be a part of the "POSSE" and not be afraid of the unknown and failure. His catchphrase, "POSSE", stands for be Positive, be Open, be Sincere, have Spirit, and don't be Exclusive.



Saturday afternoon students had the opportunity to attend a variety of workshops. Students were able to select from Career Connection, Community Service, Dynamic Leadership, FACTS, FCCLA 101, Financial Fitness, Healthy Relationships-You/Me/Us, Keep Your TV On, STOP the Violence, and Wanna be an Ultimate Leader? Advisor sessions Mrs. Bode was able to attend included FEFE, Leadership in Action, MADE for Advisors, and Your Career is You. It was an emotional roller coaster as students listened to the closing session by Jeff Yalden. Students were familiar with Jeff as he is a life coach on MTV's longest running reality show, MADE. Jeff spoke about the leadership qualities that have transformed his own life.

The FCCLA Cluster trip included additional experiences for the members as on Friday, upon arriving in Denver, students had the opportunity to eat lunch at Casa Bonita, located in Denver. Friday afternoon was spent touring Invesco Field, home of the Denver Broncos. Hard Rock Café was the dinner highlight Friday night along with the interesting walk downtown with numerous shops to see as well as carriage rides. Saturday break time featured a trip to Cherry Creek Mall. Students enjoyed the sites and indulged themselves to the unique shopping experiences of downtown Denver.



December has also been a busy month with FCCLA members once again helping the Chamber of Commerce with the annual Kids Shopping Night. Fifteen members spent the evening night helping kids make monumental decisions about what gifts to buy for those special people in their lives. The week of December 10 – 14 was also very entertaining while FCCLA members had a great time exchanging Secret Santa clues. Members enjoyed exchanging their gifts and laughs from

the week over lunch on Friday. The Winter Formal, scheduled for December 1 is now planned for January 12 and District STAR will be held January 16, 2008



I Was a Gifted Child

I was a gifted child: I was born into a two-parent family. “While logic, common sense, and research all lead to the conclusion that children growing up with one parent may have disadvantage, it is often not an easy subject to discuss.” * (The Family: America’s Smallest School, ETS 2007). Consider what else research has proved:

Children who live in single-mother families score lower on measures of academic achievement than those in two-parent families.

The percentage of school-age children of never-married parents were more than twice as likely to repeat a grade than children of married parents.

Most out-of-wedlock births are to women with low levels of educational attainment.

The percentage of children living with both parents has dropped from 77 percent in 1980 to 68 percent in 2004, but the majority of black children (65%) live in a single-parent home.

The researchers cited above insist “It is time to recognize that there is another form of inequality in the circumstance of growing up and getting educated: It is whether a child grows up in two parents in the home, or one.”

I was a gifted child: I was born into a family where both the father and the mother worked to provide for their children. Now, as some of you know, I was raised on a ranch so my mother didn’t always work outside of the ranch but she always worked. We always had nutritious food, adequate clothing, glasses to correct my brothers’ and my vision problem, and adequate health and dental care. This is often not the case in the low income families of the twenty-first century. In fact the United States now has the greatest inequality in the distribution of income of any developed nation. This inequality has been rising rapidly and we are now back to the level of inequality that was present in the 1920’s. Consider the effects of poverty on children:

Despite the existence of food aid programs over 12.5 million families are classified as “food insecure”

One third of the nations children live in households where NEITHER parent has full-time, year-round employment. In Nebraska that figure is one fourth of our children.

I was a gifted child: My family made certain I got to school on a regular basis. The research states that school attendance is a critical factor of performance among youth. Higher levels of achievement are shown for students who have high attendance rates. In fact, chronic attendance problems at the elementary level are strong predictors of the following: academic failure, dropping out of school, substance abuse, and gang and criminal activity. In fact the NAEP scores that are often used to measure a state’s academic success parallel the state’s attendance rate.

I was a gifted child: My family was involved in the school I attended. Students that have parents involved in their school are more likely to graduate from high school, have better academic performance, and experience fewer behavioral problems. In fact research has found that students perform better in school if their father is involved with the school (as well as mother), regardless of whether the father lives with the student or not. Parent participation often decreases as children move up through the grades and it also has the tendency to decrease if the student’s grades are lower.

Yes, I was a gifted child and I gifted my five children with most of the attributes listed in this article. I say most because there was a period of time, after the death of my first husband, where the two oldest girls were being raised in a single-parent family. As parents and grandparents we need to work to insure that we “gift” our children and grandchildren with the basic attributes listed above that research has proved make a significant difference in the way our children learn and enter the workforce. So you don’t have all of the attributes? Work on the ones you can. All parents can make certain their children come to school on a regular basis. Parents can choose to be involved with the school their children attend. In doing these things you are becoming a major contributor to the well-being of our country. You, too, can “gift” your children.

And, finally, if you were a “gifted” child express your thankfulness to your family for being given that “gift”. It’s never too late to acknowledge the good things that have been given to us.

If you want to read the entire research document from which this article was drawn, you can download it from: www.ets.org/research/pic The Research is titled *The Family: America’s Smallest School*.



We still collect BoxTops For Education and Campbell's Soup UPC Labels. BoxTops and Labels can be dropped off at the school at anytime. Thanks!



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rom the Principal's desk . . .

Mr. Corey Fisher
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Happy New Year! 2008 is here and I am excited to get things going for the second semester of this school year. As I am writing this piece, there are still a few days left before we dismiss students and staff for the holiday break. With that comes a flurry of things that must get done before we can officially close the doors on this semester.

Attendance is an area that I really like to stress at the beginning of each semester. All too often, some students reach the end of a semester of school only to realize that they have exceeded the schools attendance policy and they are required to appeal for credit. Some semesters are better than others and I am pleased that there are only a small few that are being required to appeal for credit based on attendance for this fall semester. Still, there are many students that really push the maximum number of seven days per semester. I would like to take this time to address all students and parents of the importance of making regular attendance a priority. There are those parents out there that believe that missing a few days here and there is not a real problem. I have heard, on occasion, that "as long as the work gets done, it is really a non issue". I would argue that comment heavily.

I am not aware of any job, whether it is while a student is in school or after they have graduated, that is or would be OK with frequent absences when there is not a real need for the absence. So often, students will miss 5-7 days in a semester and then the absences will stop, as they know they are reaching the limit. In almost 10 years of education, I have missed less than 5 days for illness. That is an average of about 0.5 days absent per school year. What I really try to watch is for absence patterns. For example, I have observed a student being frequently absent on Mondays. Another example would be a student who is always gone on the days of a test in a certain subject area. These kinds of patterns are monitored well here at Elgin Public Schools and they are addressed when the concern arises.

I would really like to challenge all parents and students to make a sincere effort to improve attendance at all levels during this second semester of the 2007-2008 school year. Parents need to emphasize attendance and make it an expectation. Just because the policy allows for seven absences per semester, it does not mean that students would try and use them. Developing good attendance behavior now will only carry on into post-secondary life. When a student is absent, they miss so much in only one day. Lectures and class discussions, exams, assignments, the opportunity to ask real-time questions is lost. Making up work is one of the single most contributors to a student's academic struggle. If they are trying to make-up work from an absence while doing the work being assigned when they are back in school, they become overwhelmed and less likely to perform at their potential. Parents must phone the school each time their child is not in school and communicate the reason. Make arrangements to get assignments picked up so that the student can stay current with assignments. Send notes to school that document the reason for the absence and encourage your child to complete all assignments in a timely manner. This is not just a high school issue, as it has become more of a concern at the elementary level in recent years.

There are certainly times that an absence is necessary such as family emergencies, legitimate illness, medical appointments and/or hospitalization and etc. I can certainly understand absences in those situations. I am referring to the absences when the student wakes up and does not come to school when they are capable of being in attendance. I openly ask those who appeal for credit based on their excessive absences if they could have been in school more than what they were and surprisingly, they are most often honest and say that they could in fact have been in school during some of those absences.

Parents, please take the time to visit with your children about your expectations and those expectations of the school. Stress the importance of being at school and being on time. By developing good attendance habits and patterns now, you will only set yourself up for success in the future. Ask any employer about the importance of regular and timely attendance and they would tell you that you couldn't keep a job if you are not capable of being there and being on time.

Wishing all of you a safe and prosperous 2008!

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