

The January and February calendar is always full, creating one of the busiest times of the year. All types of activities take place, and it seems like the buildings are in use daily and nightly. Active school buildings are a positive thing for a community, and it demonstrates the number of opportunities that our students take advantage of. In this article, I would like to discuss multiple topics, by highlighting some of the various events taking place in our district.

The State of Nebraska has been emphasizing college and career ready students. This is an important and valuable initiative by the State and one that I strongly support. Through that initiative, you may have heard a lot about Career Pathways and Career Academies. Our district is taking many steps in expanding the opportunity for students to explore and prepare themselves for various career fields. The Career Pathway Initiative is a major goal of our Board of Education. Over the past year, we have taken a strong look at middle school curriculum, graduation requirements, and current student offerings. Next year, in addition to the core subjects, middle school students will begin receiving education in all six career fields. Throughout their middle school academic career, students will receive exposure in all of the six fields, culminating in a career course that helps students highlight their strengths and interests. This will allow students to transition into the high school with a focused academic curriculum for their future.

To prepare for the Career Pathways, we have also modified our high school graduation requirements to provide students with more academic flexibility in their course selection. These requirements also include the addition of community service and job shadowing obligations. Throughout the conclusion of this school year and into next year, the district will be continuing to look at expanding our dual credit options, scheduling, the creation of actual academies and pathways, the evaluation of our facility, and undergoing the Nebraska Department of Education's reVISION process.

Community service and community involvement has become a major emphasis for our district. In the spring, the entire high school will be taking part in a community service morning to perform various community service tasks throughout the community. In addition, the City of Central City recently reached out to our leadership class to design a possible park that could appeal to multiple types of people and be unique to Central City. Students took this request very seriously and concluded their research, ideas, and designs by presenting to the City Council. The end result of their project would truly bring something unique to the City of Central City.

It has been encouraging to see our increase in student involvement, specifically with our youth programs. There has been an expanded opportunity for the youth in this community to take part in activities, and students are taking advantage of the opportunity in multiple sports and fine arts programs. Students that are involved in activities perform better in school, have less discipline issues, and attend school more.

January is already in the books, and February will quickly come and go. Not only is this time of year very busy, but this time of year also brings with it the potential for severe weather. When possible, we will put out Bison Alerts the night before inclement weather. If that is not possible, our calls will generally begin going out to families at 6am. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter for immediate notification. As always, we appreciate your support, and it is a great time to be a Bison!!!