

Elmwood-Murdock Public School Newsletter

January 2023

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT Ryan Knippelmeyer

From the Superintendent:

First, I would like to thank our school community for a successful 1st semester of the 2022-2023 school year. We greatly appreciate your support as we work to provide a great educational experience for all of our students. We look forward to a great 2nd semester of the school year! On behalf of our teachers, staff, and administrators, we hope you had a very happy Holiday season and a great start to 2023!

Post Bond Survey

Elmwood-Murdock Public Schools would appreciate your feedback on our proposed 2022 Bond Issue. Feedback will be accepted through January 25, 2023. Please use the QR code below or you may also access the survey at; <https://qrco.de/bda0fQ>

This is an anonymous survey. Names and email addresses will not be collected. We ask that each individual only complete the survey one time. We will use your feedback for future planning purposes.



District Lighting Upgrade

Over the summer and through the beginning of fall our school district completed a district lighting upgrade. All indoor lights in both of our buildings have been upgraded to LED lights, as well as our staff and student parking lots in Murdock. We also added a few additional exterior lights around the Elmwood building. Not only will these upgrades reduce maintenance work and costs over time, we're also seeing a significant reduction in our monthly electrical bill as well.

Reminder – LB 1107 – Property Tax Credit
As we approach tax season in the coming months, this is a quick reminder that property owners can receive a property tax credit for the taxes that they pay that goes to schools (not including bond issues). It's worth taking the time to talk to your tax preparer about this credit and to make sure that you are receiving the tax credit on an annual basis.

Statistical Information For Cass County Schools – 2022-2023 School Year

Total Levy Comparisons for Cass County Schools:

Elmwood-Murdock:	\$1.08
Conestoga:	\$1.04
Louisville:	\$1.14
Weeping Water:	\$1.26
Plattsmouth:	\$1.20

Keeping Our Students Safe – Stopping for School Buses:

Nationwide there's been very tragic incidents around school bus stops. Please be reminded of the following laws that pertain to stopping for school buses on the roadway (as referenced from the Nebraska Safety Center):

Two-Lane Roadway – When the school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop.

Two-Lane Roadway with a Center Turning Lane – When the school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop.

Four-Lane Roadway without a Median Separation – When the school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop.

Divided Highway of Four Lanes or More with a Median Separation – When the school bus stops for passengers, only traffic traveling in the same direction as the bus must stop.

Roadway of Four or More Lanes with a Continuous Center Turning Lane – When the school bus stops for passengers, only traffic traveling in the same direction as the bus must stop.

JUNIOR HIGH/SENIOR HIGH

Kyle Rohrig
7-12 Principal

Dear Students, Parents, and Community Members,

Welcome to the end of the first semester of the 2022-2023 school year. It's an important time of year to reflect and be thankful for what our school district has been able to collectively accomplish. As I continue into my third year as the 7-12 principal, it has been my pleasure to serve the Elmwood-Murdock school community as well as be a member of it. Our continued mission at EM High School is to empower all students to achieve success.

First and foremost, I want to commend our students on what they have individually and collectively been able to accomplish this school year. The senior class of 2023 has shown tremendous leadership in our school setting by continually setting the tone for daily attendance, hard work, and meeting high expectations from the teaching staff. I expect that they will continue to meet their goals as they transition out of the high school setting next May. Another accomplishment that needs to be highlighted is that 105 students made honor roll for the first quarter this semester. This illustrates that our students were ready to begin the school year and consistently performed in the classroom for the first nine weeks. Our students are the purpose of everything we do as a staff, and we will continue to challenge them to meet high expectations as we start the second semester of the 2022-2023 school year. I expect our students to continue to meet and exceed the learning goals that are set for them by their teachers, coaches, parents.

The teachers and support staff have done a tremendous job this first semester continuing their work to serving our student needs. In my tenure at Elmwood-Murdock I've continued to see our staff take on any challenge in the work environment time after time. One

of the realities of the current school year is staffing shortages related to many positions in our school district. Our staff has not hesitated to volunteer to drive vans and buses, cover additional classes, and embrace the team approach that better serves our students. All of the staff understand collectively that our students come first, and challenges related to the service of that mission need to be met and overcome as a team. I'd like to thank our staff once again on a terrific semester serving our students. Our efforts, together, have made a positive impact on the students that we serve in the Elmwood-Murdock schools.

I'm looking forward to the second semester of the 2022-2023 school year. Our school community can accomplish tremendous things for our students if we continue to work together in our roles. Thank you once again to all of the students, staff, community members, and district leadership. The commitment of all of us, collectively, will once again empower all students to achieve success.

ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION Trisha Nichelson

We've had an amazing start to our school year. I would like to thank our school community for all of your support to ensure our students achieve success. I would also like to thank our staff and students as they are all working hard to stay safe, healthy and learning. Every day I am thankful for the opportunities we are given and the great support system we have around us.

Thank you to our staff for the dedication to the students of our district. All of the staff including teachers, paraeducators, nurse, bus drivers, custodians, substitutes, kitchen and office personnel play an important role in the success of our students and school. For the students to be successful the staff must work together and have high expectations of themselves and their students.

We are fortunate to have students that believe that education is important and do their best on their school work and local and state assessments. I am very proud and impressed with our students' efforts and achievements on their school work thus far this year. Huge thank you to the S.O.S. group as they have continued to work to support our students with many great learning opportunities and enhancements to our school. They have helped support students through the Trunk or Treat, Family Literacy Night, meals for teachers during parent teacher conferences, Science assemblies, Knight Families, and treats to celebrate the end of the school year last year. They also grant each teacher funds to purchase classroom supplies for their classrooms yearly. The students and staff are very thankful and fortunate to have the support from this organization.

Reading is a vital component to the academic success of our students. To help foster a love of reading in our students, we use Accelerated Reading which monitors and manages student reading practice. This is a supplemental program to our general education reading curriculum. Our students have been working hard and doing a great job of setting reading goals and working to make those

goals a success. Staff and students compete monthly for reading goal success. Thank you to Mrs. Paulsen and the classroom teachers for overseeing and promoting this reading to students. Keep reading!

In July 2018, the legislature enacted the Nebraska Reading Improvement Act (Section 79-2601-79-2607) that ensures students have the necessary supports to read proficiently by grade 3. Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, the law outlines a number of processes to identify struggling readers and provide focused interventions. While most of the exemplary practices described in the legislation are already happening in our school, the law brings a renewed emphasis to the importance of early literacy and an opportunity to accelerate reading proficiency for some students. This early literacy law requires the district to set in motion procedures to identify and support students who demonstrate challenges with early reading. These include early and frequent screening, parental notification, the design of an Individualized Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP), and supplemental reading intervention services. Thank you to Mrs. Oehlerking, the Reading Advantage Team, and Kindergarten through Third grade teachers for working to ensure we are meeting these requirements and more.

The district has purchased a single-sign-on access for all students to access their reading, math, and social studies curriculum online plus other curriculums used in their classrooms. This program is called Classlink. To access Classlink, students would need to go to the school website (www.emknights.org), select the Classlink icon, then login. Parents who would like their child's login information may ask their child's teacher.

Teachers and staff work hard to help teach students appropriate behaviors in all areas of the school environment. Our Knight Pride Expectations are: Be Safe, Be Respectful, and Be Responsible. Students also have opportunities to be "Caught Being Good" in which they get a card which is placed in a classroom bucket. Cards are then drawn from these buckets for prizes such as pencils, ice cream cones from the C-Store, or money for the school store. Thank you to the Student Council and C-Store for helping support this program.

Our school mission is to Empower All Students to Achieve Success. Together with staff, students, and families we are working to fulfill this mission. Thank you to all who help in every way to ensure our students have the tools they need to achieve that success. Special Education

Many children are born with or acquire conditions that can delay their normal growth and development. Fortunately, many of these conditions can be improved if parents recognize the problem early and seek help. These conditions may impact a child's vision, speech/language, motor skills, socialization, thinking or hearing.

Currently, the district has over sixty-nine students who are being serviced with Special Education services ranging from ages birth to twenty-one. These services are covered with an Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist, Pathologist, Behavioral Therapist, Audiologist, School Psychologist, Reading Specialist, Counselors, Special Education teachers and classroom teachers. The district utilizes the Educational Service Unit #3 to help provide these services for our students. It is great to see how so many people work together to help ensure our students' success.

If you suspect your child may have developmental delays, the district offers comprehensive services for infants, toddlers, and preschool age children who have disabilities. Elmwood-Murdock is committed to providing developmentally appropriate opportunities for children to learn and grow in a safe, stimulating, and nurturing environment, using research based practices.

Check the milestones your child should have reached by his or her first birthday. This link provided by the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention gives specific milestones. Please remember that these are only guidelines. <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/milestones-1yr.html>. If a parent or physician has questions or concerns about their child's development for infants and toddlers to 3 years of age that person should contact the Early Development Network Referral Agency of the child/family or call: Nebraska Child Find (toll free) 1-888-806-6287.

For additional information on Nebraska Child Find for all children please visit: <http://www.childfind.ne.gov>.

Once a referral has been made the following will take place: The referral will be appointed to a Services Coordinator from Education Service Unit #3, who will contact the family within seven days to determine if they are interested in Early Development Network services.

With the family's permission, the Services Coordinator will arrange for an assessment with the local school district to determine the unique needs of the child and his or her eligibility. The Services Coordinator can link the family with community resources before the assessment if needed.

If the child qualifies, the Services Coordinator will work with Elmwood-Murdock Public Schools to identify others who can participate on a team to help the family develop an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), which sets goals for the child and family and identifies activities and services needed to achieve these goals. The IFSP will be completed within 45 days, so the family can access Early Development Network Services as quickly as possible.

If, as a parent, you have concerns or questions with your three to five year old child's development, set up an appointment for your child to be screened. You may set this appointment up by contacting Trisha Nicholson at tnichelson@emknights.org or 402-994-2125.

MTSS (Multi-tiered System of Support) is the intervention process initiated by the Nebraska Department of Education. This process has given a guideline as to how school districts need to have a system in place for providing interventions needed for all students to be successful in school. We have been working to improve the MTSS process at Elmwood-Murdock. At the elementary level, there are programs such as Reading Advantage, Title Reading, and Math Advantage. At the junior high level, extended reading and math classes have been offered to support student learning. The district has also been working to meet the behavioral and mental health needs through a MTSS process.

Special Education Parent Survey

The Nebraska Department of Education Special Education office has a survey for parents to provide feedback on the services provided to Special Education students. If you have a student receiving Special Education services,

we would greatly appreciate your feedback on this survey. It will be sent out to parents in January and need to be completed before March.

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR Lance Steffen

As we close out the first semester of the 2022-2023 school year, it is a time to look back and celebrate our successes and reflect fondly on how much we have to celebrate. I am proud of our students, teachers, coaches, and families for all that you have done to ensure our students the chance to learn and compete this year and to excel in many ways both in the classroom and in our activities. The fall activity season ended for the Volleyball team in the district final game against Meridian. The Volleyball team finished with a season record of 18-15. This was an exciting season with many great performances throughout. The Football team completed their season on the road with a quarterfinal round loss to North Platte St. Patrick's in the playoffs. It was a good season for Knights Football, earning a district championship. Cade Hosier was selected as 1st Team All State this season – Congratulations Cade! The team finished the season with a 9-2 record. The Cross-Country team competed well this year ending their season at the district meet. The Knights runners showed great improvement this year with most team members improving their times as the season went along. The Girls Golf Team had an awesome season as well, with many new faces playing competitively all season long. Our Vocal Music students have been very busy this year and performing nicely as a group. They have steadily improved as the year has gone on and will continue to make us proud. Nolan Story was selected as an All State participant and performed with the All State choir this fall.

The Marching Band season went well this season. Mr. Hanson and his band are always competitive and represented Elmwood-Murdock well in this year.

The Play Production Department had another successful season placing 1st in the ECNC Tournament, winning a district championship and qualifying for State Play Production for the third year in a row. At State they represented us well and came home with a 3rd place finish at the competition for the third year in a row! I am proud of the consistency and dedication the cast, crew, and sponsors exhibit. Congratulations to One Act on a great season!

Several students received All-Conference honors this fall. For Volleyball: Jordan Vogler (1st Team), Tatum Backemeyer (1st Team), and Laney Frahm (2nd Team). For Football, Sam Clements, Henry Coleman, Reid Fletcher, Cade Hosier and Riley Wilson received 1st Team recognition. Football All-District recognition was also awarded this fall. Sam Clements, Henry Coleman, Reid Fletcher, Cade Hosier, and Riley Wilson received 1st Team recognition. The Fall Academic All State recipients were also announced and Elmwood-Murdock was represented well. Tatum Backemeyer and Laney Frahm for Volleyball, Henry Coleman and Cade Hosier for Football, Will Fox, Blake Lavington, and Brianna Ross for Cross Country, and Hanna Josoff and Will Platt for Play Production. Congratulations to our outstanding students!

Congratulations to all of our students involved in after school activities. They have worked extremely hard not only during school hours, but before and after school. It is no small feat to put in the amount of time

they do in their respective activities and continue to exhibit great performances in the classroom and the field of competition. We are proud of every one of them. WAY TO GO KNIGHTS!!

Though the Homecoming Dance was held on October 2nd. On September 17th, Our Homecoming King and Queen were crowned. Candidates were: Karly Anderson, Hanna Josoff, and Ella Zierott, Henry Coleman, Reid Fletcher, and Cade Hosier. Our 2022 King was Reid Fletcher and the Queen was Karly Anderson. Congratulations to them all!

The E-M Booster Club has again been busy planning and raising money to put back into the various activities throughout the school. The Booster Club meets monthly and would love to have anyone interested come and join in on the fun. This year we have helped with the purchase of Hudl for Volleyball, Football, and Basketball teams, training equipment for our Volleyball and Basketball teams, and are in the process of purchasing new track sweats for our track teams. We do several fundraising activities throughout the school year as well and again we would love to have your help. Our first fundraiser of the year was our annual Tailgate BBQ, which was held on Friday, September 2nd. Additionally, the Booster Club has held a Bring-Your-Own-Shirt clothing fundraiser which was very successful at home basketball contests. Finally, the Booster Club will host a soup supper during the Boys and Girls Basketball game on January 24th. We hope you can all make it to the game and help support our students through the Booster Club. I also want to make sure that I thank all the Booster Club members who have helped with our various fundraisers throughout the year. It would be impossible to do all of these great things for our kids without your endless support. Finally, if you are interested in being a part of the Booster Club or in helping out just contact the school to find out where and when we will be having our next meeting. Hope to see you there!

PK-6 SCHOOL COUNSELOR **Judi Sigler**

This marks my fifth year of being a part of the Elmwood-Murdock School District. I'm fortunate to be a part of a school that strives for high standards. This year I have also moved into being a bigger part of the school because I am now here for four full days, I used to be here for half of the week. This expanded time has allowed me to reach more students and add preschool to my schedule of guidance classes too. The extra time has allowed me to add a newsletter, the Brain Chronicles, in the Knightly News. I share topics that deal with brain science, child development, and curriculum highlights. If you should ever need to talk to me about concerns regarding your child, I am glad to take time to have a confidential conversation.

The following information covers a few examples of what I do in the classroom, as well as a resource for handling technology.

New! Kimochis. The focus of the Kimochis Educator's Toolkit is to teach children to listen, speak, and act with others in positive ways that lead to academic and life success. The Keys to Kimochi Communication teach children how to use their tone of voice, body language, and appropriate words when they are in "emotional moments." The Keys teach children to be respectful in their social interactions; take responsibility for their actions; be resilient and bounce back after social challenges; and consider their own emotional needs and those of others.

Common Sense Media. Have you ever questioned whether or not zombie shows are ok for your child? Do you think about what is going on in those YouTube videos your child is obsessed with? Use CommonSense.org. They answer the question of what is OK to watch and how to handle screen time. There are guides for Tik Tok, Roblox, Fortnite, YouTube, and more. Check it out.

Lunch & Recess. The school counseling program is available for ALL students in the district. Students are welcome to schedule time with me, whether they have any particular concerns or not. I meet with various groups during lunch and recess. We sometimes create things or just visit. So if you hear your child say "I'm going to see the counselor today!" --it doesn't mean they have any "problems" --it's my way of being an available trusted adult.

Random Acts of Kindness (RAK). All students have had a portion or will continue to learn with the curriculum based around kindness. You may have noticed work centering around various themes of respect, integrity, and perseverance.

Careers & Education (4th & 6th Grades): I'm continuing a curriculum about careers and education for the 4th and 6th grade students. They are learning about personal strengths, values, and interests in relation to choosing how they want to spend their life. We're also inviting guests to speak about their careers.

Be Well. Finally, I hope you are able to take some time and put effort into restoring yourself. Schedule a no tech day, get outside, connect with an old friend, or just go get yourself a nice cup of coffee and relax! We all need balance in our lives and it's worth taking stock of how we're spending time.

7-12 SCHOOL COUNSELOR **DISTRICT CURRICULUM** **COORDINATOR** **Heather Bornemeier**

Junior High/High School Guidance
Serving Students

I continue to thoroughly enjoy being able to work with all our students! The beginning of the school year was busy with organizing student and teacher schedules as well as acclimating our 7th graders to the building. I want to take the time to highlight some of the happenings that I have facilitated or assisted with so far this school year.

In September I implemented a monthly Guidance Group with 7th and 8th graders. As individual classes, we meet once per month during one of their scheduled class periods. During Guidance Group we partake in activities and discussions centered on social-emotional learning, appropriate for each age group. This has been a great way to get to know the 7th graders and to continue working with the 8th graders. All of my guidance lessons are based on the NDE and ASCA standards of counseling.

My Website

I continue to make it my mission to open the door for communication and provide endless resources to our students, teachers, and parents. Thus, I continue to use my website that you can either access through the E-M homepage (under guidance) or by going directly to the site. Feel free to check it out. <https://hbornemeier.wixsite.com/borncounselor>

Advisory Council

Ms. Sigler and I continue to expand upon our Advisory Council which we launched three

years ago. The group includes the two of us, administration, parents, teachers, and community members. We feel that it is extremely important to have a positive working relationship with all those we serve. We continue to strive to meet the needs of our students and be open to change and growth so that our students continue to be the focus of all we do. The Advisory Council has given Judi and myself many helpful pieces of input as we continue to grow professionally and always aim to serve our students in the best ways.

SENCAP/Southeast Community College
This fall many of our Juniors and Seniors participated in the Southeast Community College SENCAP program. There are two avenues for students to learn and grow through this program: one is the college preparatory classes which count as dual credit and the other is the career path courses which offer students the opportunity to explore different careers they may be interested in. Southeast Community College partners with Elmwood-Murdock schools to help students financially with a portion of these courses.

Curriculum and Instruction **School Improvement Goals**

Our current school improvement goals are:

1. All students will improve their reading (fluency and comprehension) across the curriculum.
 2. All students will be prepared to successfully thrive in a highly competitive global technological society.
- Our school motto is to Empower All Students to Achieve Success.

Together, with staff and students, we continue to fulfill our school motto by working diligently to achieve these goals.

Curriculum

During the spring of 2022 our elementary social studies team reviewed new curriculum options. We are grateful for our school board as they approved all recommended new curriculum for the current school year for grades K-6 social studies. Our teachers have been working diligently to implement these new sets of curricula with their students.

State Assessments

The state requires two assessments to be given in the spring to all students in 3rd-8th and 11th grades. The 11th graders take the ACT exam where the other grades take the NSCAS (Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System) Growth. These exams test students in the areas of reading, math, and science. These exams are used by the state to monitor student progress and ensure school accountability for student learning.

ACT/PSAT/Accuplacer

This fall many students took the ACT, PSAT, or Accuplacer here at Elmwood-Murdock. These exams are college entrance exams to determine eligibility to attend various post-secondary institutions. These exams also help students to determine what course path they may need to take to obtain degrees they are seeking. The ASVAB was also given to all Juniors and included a comprehensive interpretation/analysis session which also included a career workshop. This exam helps students learn more about their career pathway strengths and determines eligibility to join the armed forces. Juniors will receive test preparation through John Baylor test prep in the spring.

NSAA Academic All-State

Many students were selected for Academic All-State for the fall 2022 activities season. Criteria for this award includes maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.7 or above and demonstrating leadership both on and off the field/court.

EducationQuest/Apply-to-College Day
In October, Juniors and Seniors took part in a presentation from EducationQuest teaching them some important fundamentals of applying and seeking college degrees. Topics covered were filling out applications, the FAFSA, scholarship opportunities, financial aid and other options for funding post-secondary education. Each senior was encouraged to apply to at least one college or for one scholarship on this day. Each Senior also created FAFSA ID's and started the FAFSA process.

TECHNOLOGY
Paul Dwyer

Network security and user safety has always been a top priority for our students and staff at Elmwood-Murdock. This past year we have taken many steps to improve and secure our users experience on our schools network. We have taken various steps to improve our safety of our users by implementing additional firewall security, and also are looking to add two factor authentication to some of our systems. The district has purchased two Wyebot network sensors. These sensors are constantly monitoring our wireless network for any out of the ordinary instances that might affect our wireless network.

Be sure to visit the schools website which has become a "one stop shop" for all school related information. The site contains forms needed by parents, menus, calendars, news stories, and also daily updates of happenings in school via our "Live Feed". Please visit the site at www.emknights.org. Along with our website, be sure to follow the Elmwood-Murdock twitter feed for the latest school information. Follow us @EMKnightsSchool.

The District has continued with great success to use striv.tv as the vehicle to stream various activities that are held at both the Murdock and Elmwood sites. Striv.tv is an online streaming application, that allows us to stream our home athletic activities and also a few select other events. Please turn into our striv.tv channel for a listing of all events and also to view our live events. You can check it out at <http://striv.tv/channel/elmwood-murdock>.

We have just started our 5th year of our 1:1 laptop initiative for grades 4-12. One of the great benefits of this project has been for students in grades K-3 to keep their laptop carts up to date at a faster rate than if we had not been involved in a 1:1 project. This is due to new laptops that are purchased for the incoming freshman each year, has allowed the older laptops (Seniors that graduate) to be updated and placed down in our carts for the lower grade levels.

SPECIAL EDUCATION
READING ADVANTAGE
Keri Hogue

I am continuing to do different activities and approaching learning in a variety of ways for students preschool through sixth grade. This year you will continue to find me and my "Classroom on a Cart" in many classrooms most of the day with an individual or small group. Working with a variety of ages provides opportunities for a variety of goals and successes. With those goals, I have found that celebrating the littlest things is a big key to helping your child feel success and stay motivated to do more. Two things I implement in all areas of curriculum for my students are specific praise and recognition. We always hear, "Good job!" or "Wow! You did it!" But even as adults, and in our jobs and daily lives we value specific praise even more as it gives us a sense of knowing we're doing our jobs and meeting

the expectations of those around us. Why wouldn't it be the same for our children? It most definitely is.

A great resource I use for praise has always been from the list of "101 Ways to Praise Your Child". I keep a copy posted on my wall at school by my desk and a smaller copy on my refrigerator at home. I have never discovered who the original author is, but if you type it in your search bar on the internet, you will find the list with no problem. It helps you think of more ways to share praise with your child. I, then, always extend the praise further by recognizing what the student did. For example, when a student uses a reading strategy in a small group, I will say, "Now you've got it! You reread that last sentence so it makes more sense. Super work."

With recognition at school, we will do a quick visit to the office or classroom teacher to share the success and have the student demonstrate it again. At home, you can discuss the success at the dinner table with family, do a quick call to extended family or family friend, or just have your child repeat what he or she just did and affirm them with more specific praise. Specific praise and recognition will validate the child's smallest efforts and his or her attempts to do his or her best. This keeps everyone motivated. If we can keep students motivated to succeed in the little things, it creates many layers of confidence to accomplish the big goals not only in reading, writing, and math, but in all areas of life.

SPEECH-LANGUAGE
PATHOLOGIST
Rhonda Towle
Libby Stiles

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) in public schools work with children who have communication impairments. These can include children who have spoken and written language disorders, difficulty producing sounds, stuttering, as well as cognitive-communication disorders. Communication can even include social skills. Each child is unique, and being able to work with a wide age-range of children and families makes each day unique and overall rewarding.

Parents often wonder if their child's communication is typically developing. There are a number of factors that SLPs and early childhood educators can look at to determine if speech-language services are warranted. Early intervention leads to better results. Do not wait to get help. Free services are available to infants and toddlers as well. If you suspect your child could benefit from an early childhood evaluation please contact Trisha Nicholson (994-2125) and she can help guide you through the process of early intervention.

To learn more about communication impairments, including tips on how to stimulate speech and language development, please visit the American Speech-Language Hearing Association's website at www.asha.org. There is a wealth of information regarding all types of communication impairments including tips on identifying signs of speech and language disorders.

PRESCHOOL
Courtney Baer
Jordan West

Phonological Awareness is a goal in preschool to help them with early reading skills.

Reading 1,000 books throughout the preschool school year. Studies show that if a child has read at least 1,000 books before

kindergarten it can immensely help with independent reading.

Exploring new information related to unit themes such as making friends, families, food, neighborhood, transportation, animals, and nature.

Social Emotional Skills, learning on how to interact appropriately with peers. Social emotional skills are the foundation to successful learning.

Continuing to work on fine motor skills.

Handwriting Without Tears sets afternoon preschoolers up for success in kindergarten.

Optimistic that we will continue to learn new and exciting things all year long.

Outside is helping us get our bodies moving while working on gross motor and social development.

Learning all about school and adjusting to new routines which will benefit them as they tackle a full day of school and Knight expectations. We have two preschool paraprofessionals, Kim Griffin and Vanessa Callaway that help with our daily learning.

KINDERGARTEN
Diane Vice
Mikaela Collins

"What did you do in school today?" Kindergarten children are constantly asked this age-old question. The responses are often brief or the parents just get a shrug. Well, if you were to ask the kindergarten teachers what they think the children should say, the responses might be...

- "Learned that words are made up of sounds."
- "Worked on letter recognition."
- "Practiced coming up with rhyming words"
- "Isolated beginning and ending sounds of words"
- "Identified the number of syllables in words"
- "Memorized sight words."
- "Wrote short sentences using capitals and punctuation in the right places."
- "Listened to stories to develop comprehension skills."
- "Read aloud predicable text stories"
- "Formed letters in handwriting."
- "Cut and colored to build strong motor skills."
- "Identified numbers to 30."
- "Counted by ones and tens to 100."
- "Sorted and compared objects."
- "Added and subtracted numbers to 10"
- "Collected and analyzed data through graphs."
- "Utilized many math skills during Calendar Time"

...and that's just for reading and math!!!

Our "Morning Meetings" help build relationships and make us a Kindergarten Family. This lets us see what we have in common and also what makes us unique!

Theme time gives us opportunities to use the skill areas to learn about science, social studies and health topics. So far this year we have studied cultures and diversity, the four seasons, harvest, pumpkins, Thanksgiving, kindness, Kelso Choices for conflict management and good character traits.

The next time you ask that age-old question, you can smile at the quick response you get because you know the real answer.

TWELVE WEEKS OF FIRST GRADE
Vanessa Drucke
Kori Dlouhy

On the 1st week of first grade my teacher gave to me, routines and rules and games to get to know each other and build our character.

On the 2nd week of first grade my teacher gave to me, counting, comparing, and adding numbers.

On the 3rd week of first grade my teacher gave to me, math strategies to learn addition and subtraction facts, patterns, and different kinds of graphs.

On the 4th week of first grade my teacher gave to me, knowledge of fire safety, bats, sound waves, Thanksgiving with the pilgrims and Winter Holidays Around the World.

On the 5th week of first grade my teacher gave to me, centers to demonstrate the skills we have learned in phonics, reading, and writing.

On the 6th week of first grade Mrs. Sigler gave to me, a guidance lesson on building a school community with teamwork and working together.

On the 7th week of first grade my teacher gave to me, a computer to practice my math skills on iXL.com

On the 8th week of first grade my teacher gave to me, a book to read for AR points.

On the 9th week of first grade my teacher gave to me, 5 high frequency words with some amazing words to build my vocabulary.

On the 10th week of first grade my teacher gave to me, knowledge of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and proper and common nouns.

On the 11th week of first grade my teacher gave to me, MAPS tests to see how much I have learned. (AND WE HAVE LEARNED A LOT!)

On the 12th week of first grade my teacher gave to me, a gift to take home and a break from all the learning and my friends to spend with family.

While we have learned a lot in 2022, we have so much more coming in 2023. Wishing you all a happy holiday!

2ND GRADE
Megan Barnes
Celena Mortimer
Stephanie Smith

S—Sharing, caring, learning and growing are the outcomes of practicing our Knight Expectation skills. Second Graders are encouraged to resolve conflicts on their own.

E—Enjoying the holiday season by helping others that are less fortunate. Second Graders have donated items to help fill stockings for local children.

C—Children are our focus, we love watching them grow as students and individuals. Children have already shown growth in many areas with much more to come.

O—Operations in math like addition and subtraction need speed and accuracy. We are all busy using our math reasoning skills and explaining our mathematical thinking...there is so much to learn!

N—Notes to sing need to be practiced with Mrs. Graff for our public performances like the Winter and Spring Program.

D—Do you know the Knights' Motto? Ask a Second Grader to tell you what it is. We are working hard to show our Knight Pride at school and in the community!

G—Guidance with Ms. Sigler focuses on how to use our social problem solving skills. Stories and modeling help us navigate real-life situations before they happen.

R—Reading strategies are essential in our encounters with the printed word. Our small reading groups work on stories, comprehension, language skills, and vocabulary. Thank You to Mrs. Oehlerking, Mrs. Hogue, and Mrs. Paulsen for supporting our reading skills.

A—All the extra help that our paraeducators provide in the classroom, lunchroom, and before and after school is greatly appreciated. Thanks for all you do!

D—Do some exercise to have a healthy mind and body. Play a new game to learn good sportsmanship. Mr. Backemeyer teaches us this and more in PE.

E—Everything else in our curriculum is just as important for a balanced student. So let's include Social Studies, which presents a great opportunity for multicultural activities. Science experiments are a plus. School Assemblies are always educational and entertaining! And that, after all, is what teaching second graders is all about!

3RD GRADE
Cayle Burbach
Jennifer Justus

If you observe any third grader for nine months you will see some amazing changes. They are becoming more responsible, developing a sense of humor, keying in on what really interests them, and hopefully becoming a lifelong learner. In the beginning of the year we gathered a lot of data. We have decided that we need to concentrate on three main academic areas to help our students be successful: reading, math, and writing. Our students need to be able to read, understand, communicate in the 21st century, and be able to become problem solvers.

We are in our 2nd year of our new language arts curriculum-Wonders 2020, and students have been very adaptive to it. They are enjoying the new stories, genres, and online activities. We love that it gives us a variety of texts to support the learning, as well as multiple opportunities to engage our readers. We have studied the following genres: expository text, folktales, narrative nonfiction, realistic fiction, historical fiction, poetry, and argumentative text (they really enjoyed learning to argue).

This year we are working hard to develop a sense of independent reading within a book that is the "right fit". Meaning that the student can read the words, and comprehend the story without help from an adult. This helps to increase their fluency, as well as, comprehension. We also encourage reading at home, either for the BOOK IT Program, or for their A.R. points-with the goal of 14 per quarter.

In writing, students are working on writing quality paragraphs with topic sentences, details and closing sentences. This can be a tough subject for most 3rd graders because we go through the writing process of draft, edit, revision & publish. We are also creating technology pieces to present to the class as writing projects. We will begin to learn cursive in April, after our state assessment. Students love to learn cursive!

We are working and exploring very hard in math. We have learned a variety of strategies, and the kids have found some favorites that they like to use. We have also incorporated ixl.com as a center time activity to help build fluency. We have studied multiplication, division, area, graphing, and addition & subtraction strategies. Our students have shown great effort and skill development with these areas of math, and we are so proud of them.

To wrap up our year, 3rd graders get to study Social Studies and Science. Each section gets 2 quarters of both classes, and they switch teachers. In S.S. with Mrs. Justus, we have started our first year of our new curriculum, My World by Saavas, and while at times it

can seem challenging, the students are really enjoying it! We have studied Our Environment, Economics, and are currently studying Communities Build a Nation. They are learning about a whole new world without even leaving the classroom. We cannot thank the school and district enough for purchasing this curriculum!

In Science with Mrs. Burbach, they have studied animal adaptations and changes that affect ecosystems using the STEMScopes curriculum. They love experimenting and creating, including our very own model of a fossil. We also investigate magnets and a few natural hazards.

We can't wait to see what 2023 has in store for our 3rd graders!

4TH GRADE
Cindy Backemeyer
Alex Baxa

Fourth grade is an important year where students grow in both academics and social development. This is also a year for increased responsibility when it comes to being prepared for projects, homework, and tests. This year we hope and strive for improvement in organization, work ethic, and responsibility. We often tell the students that the strategies they are developing now are the same skills that will help them become lifelong learners and be successful in whatever career they someday choose.

Reading is essential, as we use it in every subject area. We spend a great deal of our morning building reading fluency to aid students in becoming successful independent readers. Being a proficient reader helps students become strong in all subject areas. We do quarterly fluency reads, and students read aloud often in class. This is our second year using a new reading curriculum called "Wonders." This new curriculum has a wealth of resources which include, student anthologies, journals, graphic organizers, and weekly readers. Also, to strengthen and evaluate comprehension skills, we also use a program called Accelerated Reader. Students earn points and track the number of words read. Every quarter students have a point goal to meet. Our goal for the third quarter will be 48 points. Many students are working hard at home and school to reach their goals. Besides independent reading, we are working on novels in small groups and other read-aloud activities. All of this helps to encourage fourth graders to love reading.

By the time you read this letter, we will have completed topic seven in our Envision Mathematics Series. The Envision series encourages students to use modern methods to solve math problems rather than traditional algorithms. Although we use the new techniques, we are also teaching the traditional strategies alongside. The new series helps students grow in their problem solving skills due to the multi-step problems they have to solve each day. This year we have spent a great deal of time practicing multiplication and division facts before we could move on to more difficult concepts. It is "vital" that students have their basic facts memorized. They will use these facts for the rest of their lives and in all future math classes. We also use a math website called IXL. It is a wonderful computer program that helps reinforce the skills we are learning in the classroom.

Elmwood-Murdock is lucky to be one-to-one with Chromebooks in fourth grade. We use our Chromebooks to practice keyboarding using a program called Edutyping. This allows us to learn how to keyboard correctly and type without looking at our fingers. Stu-

dents are using their Chromebooks in many different ways. Students utilize their Chromebooks to review and study for tests using Blooket, Kahoot, Nearpod, and other online tools. We also use Google Docs as a place to type our final draft stories. Google Docs will be a resource students use until 12th grade at Elmwood-Murdock. Students will be using other programs on their Chromebooks, such as Google Slides to make a slideshow for their Native American projects.

In Language, all of our lessons this year have focused on the Six Traits of Writing: Ideas, Voice, Organization, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions. Four times a week, we do Daily Language Review editing. This helps us find the errors in a sentence and rewrite the sentence correctly. We also do the grammar skills that go with our reading series each week. We are becoming a class of authors and have written three six paragraph essays. All of our stories start with brainstorming and writing a rough draft. Then, we do editing and a final draft. Students are able to type their final drafts in Google Docs. We also do a great deal of writing in both science and social studies. Both teachers are excited about the growth we have seen in writing this year and hope for even more to come.

We have high expectations for our students. At Elmwood-Murdock, we want our students to have a strong work ethic and become well rounded individuals. We have enjoyed guiding them on their learning journey. Thank you to all the parents for the support they have given us this year. We are so glad to be able to work with you and your child. We can't wait to see even more growth during the second semester.

5TH GRADE READING 6TH GRADE READING & ENGLISH Heather Holub

I'm in my 6th year at Elmwood-Murdock, in which I teach 5th and 6th grade Reading, 6th grade English, along with 5th grade Home-room. The first semester is an adjustment for the fifth-graders, because they now have four teachers' rooms in which they rotate classes with throughout the day. Therefore, students are learning a lot about their organization skills and being responsible with their work; it takes time to figure out how to organize for all the classes.

The fifth and sixth grade Reading classes have been working hard on vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension skills. Students have been writing for a variety of purposes. Some of the students' favorite papers so far include: Persuasive and Personal Narrative. The second semester will be spent focusing on Prefixes, Suffixes, and using context clues to help them decode the meaning of unfamiliar or unknown words. Students will be writing about the person they each want to become when they grow up, along with researching a famous person and a future career/college.

The fifth and sixth graders have been working hard to reach their reading goal for Accelerated Reader (A.R.). This assesses students' comprehension of books they have read. For the second semester, students will be working extremely hard to get more A.R. points than they had in the first semester. By the end of first semester, each fifth grader's goal is to have 36 points, while the goal for the sixth graders is 40 points. The top 5th grade reader has 214.0 points thus far, and the highest 6th grade reader has 411.5 points in the first semester. Terrific work reading and keep up the wonderful effort!

When students enter fifth grade, they receive a Chromebook for the first time in their educational career to use during the school day. The students are learning how to utilize the Chromebooks and type, along with being accountable for them. They are to take care of the computers, plus are responsible for making sure they are charged. We are very thankful for the Chromebooks!

5TH HISTORY & ENGLISH 6TH HISTORY Sarah Parsons

This is my first year teaching at Elmwood-Murdock, and I have been blessed with such a great group of students to start with! I have a fifth grade homeroom and I teach history to both fifth and sixth grades along with English to fifth grade.

In fifth grade history class, we focus on American History. We start at the beginning with Native Americans and work our way through the colonial times, the American Revolution, the Civil War, both World Wars, the Cold War, and then into challenges we face in today's world. Each chapter, we have a hands-on project that helps us connect to the content.

Fifth grade gets to present to the school for Constitution Day. This year we prepared and performed a mini musical for the school to share information about the Constitution. The students brought props and costumes to bring the presentation alive. All the students did a great job!

In sixth grade history class, we focus on World History. Our book travels from continent to continent and country to country comparing the geography, history, and current challenges of each region. This semester we focused mostly on the Americas. The sixth graders worked on a comparison essay of Canada and the United States for one of their bigger projects this semester. Next semester, we will get to learn more about the cultures and history of the other parts of the world. They will also get to do projects for the other regions we will learn about to deepen their understanding.

5TH & 6TH GRADE SCIENCE 5TH GRADE COMPUTER Monte Frerichs

It has been a great year in the 6th grade. The 6th graders have been working hard on keeping our school safe, being responsible, being respectful, and being their best. It is always a big step for students as they begin their last year at the elementary school and start working toward the transition to Junior High. The students have classes in different rooms and also have different teachers throughout the day. I teach 5th and 6th grade Science and 5th grade Computer.

In 5th grade Science the students have completed units on Structures and Properties of Matter and Matter and Energy in Organisms and Ecosystems.

In 6th grade Science the students have completed units on Energy, Motion, Structure and Function of Cells, and Heredity and Traits.

In 5th grade Computer the most important thing that students learn is how to use technology appropriately. I teach lessons on how to be a good digital citizen and how to be safe using technology. The students have had a variety of practice with different programs. We started off the year with keyboarding and continue to work on our speed and accuracy. We will continue to grow with technology as our digital world grows.

As we begin 2023 we will continue to strive for high achievement. Along with lofty academic goals, the 6th grade has high expectations for good character. We believe that having good character traits will mold us into model citizens and set us up for success in the future.

5TH & 6TH GRADE MATH Robin Kuhlman

I am once again blessed with another great group of students who are excited to learn and challenge themselves to get better every day. They make coming to work fun!

The 5th-grade math class completed units on multiplying and dividing with whole numbers and decimals and with adding and subtracting fractions. To begin the second semester the students will learn to multiply and divide fractions. We will then work with data analysis, geometry, coordinate planes and algebra concepts.

The 6th-grade math class is embracing the challenge of learning algebra. They have learned about positive rational numbers, integers, algebraic expressions, how to represent and solve equations, and graphing inequalities. Second semester will be spent learning about rates, ratios, percent, geometry and data analysis. I am proud of their positive attitude and willingness to learn new things. Their EFFORT has been wonderful!

6th-grade students have taken time to study Digital Citizenship and the 7 Habits of Successful Teens. They have learned to be responsible for their own actions, to take ownership in their work, set short term and long term goals, prioritize work that needs to be accomplished first, listen to understand others, teamwork and leadership. It awesome to see the students develop these skills throughout the year.

The 6th-grade students are learning programming skills and problems solving strategies by using Code.org and Dash Robots. They have been working with algorithms, debugging, looping, and more! It is fun to see them problem solve to get the robot to complete a given task.

Operation Santa!! One of the most exciting times of the year for a child is Christmas. Getting gifts is exciting. However, giving gifts is exciting too! The 5th & 6th-grade classes work with a local church to provide gifts for Operation Santa. We purchase, wrap and donate gifts for children in our community. We wrapped and donated over 70 items this year. The kids really enjoy the feeling of giving to help others.

MATH INTERVENTION ELEMENTARY PHYSICAL EDUCATION Curt Backemeyer

This is the fifth year of our Math Intervention program entitled "Math Advantage" at the Elementary School. This program is currently serving 22 students as a supplement to regular math instruction in grades k-6. Students qualify for the "Do the Math" curriculum based on Measures of Academic Performance (MAPs) or NSCAS (Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System) scores, which are given in the fall, winter, and spring. The curriculum consists of 13 modules ranging from basic number concepts to fractions and presents many hands-on activities along with alternative strategies to help improve math skills. Progress is monitored through assessments at the end of each lesson in addition to assessments at the beginning, middle, and end of each module.

In elementary Physical Education this year we again utilize the SPARK curriculum. In grades k-2 we have completed units in Building a Foundation, Recess games, Dribbling-Volleying-Striking, Parachute, and Manipulatives. Units for grades 3-6 have included Softball/Baseball, Aerobic Games, Volleyball, Chasing and Fleeing, Football, Fitness Challenges, and Flying Disc. We continue to emphasize healthy lifestyles through staying active and eating a balanced diet. Respecting others is a point of emphasis through cooperating and showing good sportsmanship. We also continue to emphasize our additional school goals of being safe, responsible, and doing your best!

TITLE ONE READING READING ADVANTAGE Carae Oehlerking

Reading is Dreaming with Your Eyes Open

Reading is a life skill, it is used for enjoyment and professional purposes throughout life. Reading helps you to see the world from a different perspective. As the Title One Reading and Reading Advantage teacher, I want to help foster the love of reading in all students. Reading is a skill that takes practice, just like walking, driving, and playing sports. This year the Title One and Reading Advantage programs work with over 50 students to help them find and feel success in reading. The reading interventions include in-class support, small group work, and one-to-one work. These interventions help build the foundations of reading and put strategies in place for students to use across the curriculum to gain the confidence they need to succeed.

Imagination can take you anywhere... We have heard that many times, students need to continue to use their imagination as they grow. Reading is a great way for students to encourage that imagination, to paint pictures in their minds, to be creative, and to gain the desire to want to explore more in life. Reading builds with different skills taught at different age levels. The younger students are busy working on letter identification, phonemic awareness, letter/sound correspondence activities, spelling, and digraphs. Once those concepts are satisfactory, students can progress to harder digraphs, vowel teams, blends, fluency/expression, spelling, comprehension skills and more. To help your child continue to progress, please work on all these reading strategies at home as well. Make their imaginations come to life: build a fort, read outside, act out a scene in a book, create a poster of the story they have read, etc.

Family Reading Night was cold, but a success! "Kindness Rocks and so do Books" was the theme this year. Students were able to paint a kindness rock to take home, listen to three different stories about being kind and helping others, and complete activities to go with each story they heard. Many THANKS go out to all of my student and teacher helpers that night! They continue to make the dream come true... Today a reader, tomorrow a leader.

Continue to enjoy reading with your children and grandchildren. You are the first teacher in their lives and make the biggest impact. Set that positive example and READ, READ, READ! The enjoyment that I see as students grow and make connections as readers is very fulfilling. Thank you for all of your hard work and support.

ENGLISH Hayley Block

Freshman English

We have been busy in Freshman English this year. First Quarter we completed our first novel study, Anthem by Ayn Rand. This book lead to many interesting discussions about individualism, and the contrasting ideas of Collectivism, the idea that everyone is and should be the same. We have explored many short stories and poems. The favorite of the semester was "The Most Dangerous Game" by Richard Connell. For spooky season we looked at Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven". We have been working on a Classical Mythology unit and are ending it by read though the main parts of the Classical Epic, "The Odyssey". We should finish this unit up by the end of January, moving on to Romeo and Juliet in time for Valentines Day.

8th Grade English

8th Grade has been working on the Elements of Literature by reading both fiction and non-fiction texts over the course of the first semester. Some class favorites were the very creepy stories, "The Monkey's Paw" and "The Land Lady." Students also completed an independent book project over the course of six weeks. We read a historical fiction novel together, My Brother Sam is Dead by Christopher Collier and James Lincoln Collier, which focus on a family torn apart by the Revolutionary War. We are starting a Poetry Unit where we will study different types of poetry and the poetic elements, as well as trying our hand at writing our own poems to compile in a final project.

7th Grade English

7th Grade English is going well. We started first quarter with some short stories that always well received like "Rikki Tikki Tavi" and the spooky "Three Skeleton Key." We also read a screen play from the Twilight Zone called "The Monsters are Due on Maple Street." In second Quarter, we started a novel together called "The Westing game." We are having a great time reading this murder mystery and keeping track of clues to figure out who did it.

Speech (10th Grade)

In speech class this semester, we have worked on becoming more comfortable with being in front of our peers and presenting. Our big presentations have been a How-to speech, an informational, and a persuasive speech. Students spent a great deal of time researching, writing and preparing for these speeches. We rounded out the semester with a ScreenCast project, which is a technology driven How-to presentation.

MATH Travis Brewer

My 9th and 10th grade geometry students have learned many concepts so far such as: tools of geometry, reasoning, proofs, parallel and perpendicular lines, congruent triangles, and relationships inside triangles. My geometry classes have been using an online math website called IXL to strengthen their math skills throughout the school year. IXL meets the unique needs of each learner with individualized guidance. We have focused on being able to effectively use protractors and compasses. In class we have done many different types of constructions using these tools. These constructions would include: Copying angles, bisecting angles, constructing parallel lines, constructing perpendicular lines, and constructing the circumcenter. I am looking forward to a great 2nd semester, where we will be learning about quadrilaterals, proportions, trigonometry, transformations, symmetry, circles, areas of polygons, surface area, volume, probability, and measurement.

My 7th and 8th grade pre-algebra students

have learned many different concepts as well. These concepts would include: tools of algebra, operations with integers, operations with rational numbers, expressions and equations, multi-step equations, and inequalities. My pre-algebra classes have also been using IXL to strengthen their math skills throughout the school year. Pre-Algebra students have been focusing on developing fluency with rational numbers and proportional relationships. We have had a strong focus 1st semester on working with fractions, mixed numbers, and decimals. We have estimated, simplified, solved single and multi-step equations, solved single and multi-step inequalities, and converted units using decimals, fractions, and mixed numbers. I am looking forward to 2nd semester in pre-algebra where we will be learning about ratios, proportions, percent's, linear functions, graphing, powers, triangles, distance, angles, surface area, volume, statistics and probability.

Extended Math-Students in extended math have the opportunity to improve on their math skills and abilities that they learned in their regular math classes. Students in this class have been using prodigy math, delta math, moby max, and more programs. Prodigy math is a web-based math program that is aligned to the common core state standards. Prodigy will motivate students at all levels with prodigy math games that uses an adaptive learning platform. I use prodigy to help prompt a deeper understand of the underlying math principles to ensure students learn to apply the new knowledge. In Delta math the math problems are randomized, allowing for students to get unlimited opportunities to the practice math skills. They also get instant feedback on any math problems that they missed. Delta math shows the students the step by step process to get to the correct answer anytime they miss a problem.

CAREER & TECHNICAL SCIENCES Don Brothers

As classes are winding down for the first semester everyone is working hard on projects, welds and building model houses.

The Building construction class has finished all of their drafting in class and are working on a scaled model house from their drafting plans. They have finished the framework and are now doing the hip style roof on the house.

Welders are busy working on required test welds and final tests for college credit through Southeast Community college and working on various welding projects in the lab.

The Architectural Drafting students are using a Chief Architect program to design and build homes of various styles. They have design ranch homes, adobe houses and Greek Revival houses just to name a few.

Our Technology 7 students have been busy this quarter building mousetraps cars and are currently building wooden shelves they designed in class. They have cut their materials, sanded and stained. They are currently in the middle of assembly and clear coating. They will all be bringing home their projects this week

Technology 8 students finished their Drafting section of the class and are currently also working on their woods projects. They all have been doing a great job on their projects and will be bringing them home this week.

SPANISH CLASS Manuel Camina

"BIENVENIDOS A ESPAÑOL." This year

we have four different levels of Spanish. We have two groups of Spanish I. One of them is big and one of them much smaller. We are learning all the basic stuff, how verbs work in Spanish, how to describe someone, school subjects and items we use and how to express what we like and what we don't like.

In Spanish II we have two awesome groups. We get a little deeper in Spanish grammar and we have been learning "the boot" verbs, the past tenses, and the direct and indirect objects. We have pen pals in the other part of the world. We are learning not only language, but things people do in Spanish speaking countries.

In Spanish III classes, most of the time we are speaking just Spanish and students can have conversations with me. We even enjoy reading about "Cata and Leti", and we play games like "Codigo Secreto" "Timeline" or "Scattergories. We even have conversation days with a student in Spain. This class really shows desire to learn and use a new language and that makes that class really easy to enjoy.

We also have three groups of exploratory Spanish. Seventh graders take it and it is fun. We are learning basic vocabulary, playing bingo and hangman, and researching about Spanish speaking countries. During the first weeks we had a transition class where we all learned a lot.

MATH **Noah Fisher**

This year has been quite fun to start. For the first time in a while, we are experiencing a "normal" school year. Over the summer, I completed my master's in math education and now have the ability to teach dual credit College Algebra going forward.

I have enjoyed being able to pick up a different class to benefit the students. It has been a good start to the year for all classes. Much like last year, many of my classes are moving quickly with their pacing. Students have also been benefiting from the incorporation of real-world problems into much of the curriculum.

Many of the junior year classes are well ahead of the pacing of last year, which will benefit students when it comes time to start ACT preparations. They will be able to spend extra time reviewing for the state assessment. Overall, this year has been going well, and my hope is that it continues in the same fashion and we can have a wonderful second semester.

VOCAL MUSIC **Mindy Graff**

Elementary music classes have been focusing on creating music through singing, listening, movement, and playing basic rhythmic/melodic instruments. We performed a song for the Veteran's day program in Nov. In addition, the elementary students prepared music selections for their annual Christmas program in Dec. Each class put in a lot of effort on both singing and performance skills; making it a very festive K-3 and 4-6th grade Christmas Program for our community!. The 4th graders added ukuleles to the performance for the first time. accompanying a song using four main chords they learned from the fall. When we return from break some will begin working on units that involve Orff instruments, and a few grades will work with a fretted instrument; learning the ukulele (different grades than the fall!) Some classes like 6th grade will focus on choral singing as they prepare for their first experience with Malcolm Music Contest in the spring!

In the 7-8th grade choir, we have been working on beginning choir skills, vocal technique (as a choir and individually), and community building within the group. The group continues to pick up part singing fairly quickly and has grown in ability and confidence! In the fall we worked on many different styles and types of music, exposing them to a broad repertoire of choral music! Finally for their annual Christmas Concert, they performed four selections for their first time in front of an audience! In January they will begin both large group and small group/solos for Malcolm Contest.

In the 9-12th grade choir, we have a small but talented group this year! They are working to strengthen individual voices and improve their overall sound as a group. In the fall we worked on varied repertoire from Bach Chorales to 21st century Madrigals and all the way to a Musical Theater selection! Students also worked in class on ECNC literature and All-State selections. The Choir performed in Nov. at the Veteran's Day Ceremony and in Dec. at the annual Jr./Sr. Christmas Concert! They worked on five selections for their program and enjoyed sharing their music with the community! In January the 9-12 choir will begin music for District Music Contest and work on both small group and large group selections!

For grades 7-12 outside of class, vocal music students attended a few honor choirs this fall! In November we attended the ECNC Honor Choir hosted at Mead. From EM fourteen Jr. high and ten high school students participated with top selected singers from our conference. They worked with two guest clinicians during the day culminating in an evening public performance! We also attended the NMEA Nebraska All State Conference in November. This year they began the first ever Middle Level All State Choir. It was comprised of 240 selected 7-8th grade students from across the state. Nine middle school students from Elmwood-Murdock auditioned for this opportunity and five were selected for this honor; Ziva Arent, Dylan Bornemeier, Austin Wagner, Carson Towle, and Brody Marsh. They attended in Lincoln on Nov. 16th and performed at the Lied Center on UNL's Campus! In addition to the Middle Level All State Choir, we also had four high school students audition for the Nebraska High School All State Chorus in September. Sophomore, Nolan Stroy was selected on the tenor voice part! He attended Nov. 16-18th, and performed in a concert on the Lied Stage at UNL on Nov. 18th. He performed with around 440 of the top selected singers from across the state of Nebraska! This is the highest honor a high school choral student can accomplish!

Overall it was a busy first half of the school year, however the students grew and experienced success as an ensemble (in all grade levels). I am excited to see and hear all of the musical growth from each group as we move into 2nd semester! Thank you for continuing to support the arts in our community! I really enjoy sharing my love of music with the students at Elmwood Murdock Public Schools!

ENGLISH **Garrett Hall**

It's been another exciting and challenging semester in the English department at Elmwood-Murdock high school. It is always great to get to know the new students and parents as the new year starts. I enjoy taking on new challenges and working with students as we move forward in our exploration of English and literature.

In AMEX the juniors are continuing to progress through the history of American Literature. This year, we are still using the new textbook and online supplement. We recently finished reading about the Realism and Regionalism movements and at the start of the new year we will be reading literature from the World War One time period. We will also complete a class novel (The Great Gatsby) together. The reading and writing assignments that we are doing should help prepare us for the ACT this spring.

The sophomores have been hard at work on various essays and assignments this year. They have recently completed the unit on Hamlet and finished the grammar test for the year. Next semester, we will start reading classic American novels like To Kill A Mockingbird and Of Mice and Men. The seniors that I have this year have been working hard in Composition and will be starting the challenging Modern Fiction class in the second semester. I have been pleased with the students and am proud of their achievements in class this year. I am happy to be a dual credit instructor for Southeast Community College. I think the dual-credit classes that we offer are a great opportunity for our students.

Finally, I want to take a second and discuss the European History and Creative Writing classes. The classes were added to the course catalogue three years ago. European History started with the cradle of civilization and the Stone Age and should end on the formation of the European Union towards the end of the second semester. The Creative Writing class has recently finished their first short story portfolio of the year and will continue to work on bigger and better projects as the year continues.

I am thankful to have the support of students and the community in our endeavors, and I look forward to the coming semester.

BAND **Michael Hanson**

This year has been a musical year so with growth in elementary numbers. We have maintained numbers in the Elementary and Jr. High Band, displayed very good test scores, and performed well at Applejack to show for our continued time and work. Beginning with the 5th Grade Band; this year we have 34 aspiring, eager students enrolled in the 5th grade band and 30 in the 6th Band. We have almost a perfect balance of instrumentation with the elementary 5-6th band, which will help to produce a mature sound with the band in the future. The elementary has performed at the Winter Concert. We are excited how the elementary have improved this year and look forward to their future in the program. A special thanks to the students that practice after school.

The Jr. High Band has maintained a solid number of 40 students with a continued balanced instrumentation. We have had several performances this year and continue to prepare for various community and school related performances. We are spending a great deal of time working on improving the student's ability to read and to produce a high-quality tone and adjust their sound to make the best sound possible without teacher intervention, which is a skill that takes a great deal of higher order thinking skills. This year we are focusing on sectional work and repetition to develop individual skills while in the large ensemble setting. Several students auditioned for the Wayne Honor Band and we will post results to the website.

The High School Band continues to play at a high level despite the smaller numbers. We are 22-student strong and have a very good balance as far as instrumentation. In April of 2022 the Band earned an Excellent rating at District Contest. We have competed several times and earned 4th place at the Applejack Parade, we placed 17 out of 35 in Class C at the Harvest of Harmony Parade. We have been and are preparing for various concert band performances including the Veterans Day performance and Winter Concert.

Individually, we are continuing to see many students shine musically as well. Several students auditioned or will for the Wayne State Honor Band, Class C State Honor Band, and ECNC Honor Band.

Thank you to the school board for approving our annual budget and repairing many school instruments for the school year. We purchased a new baritone and two French horns over the past 3 years. In the next couple of years, we will be replacing older school owned instruments to modernize our instrument inventory which on average the instruments are over 30 years old. We thank all of the community support of the Band program and will continue to strive for excellence in music and academics in the Elmwood-Murdock Band Program.

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCE **Lisa Hynes**

Foods, Nutrition and Wellness

Students have been busy learning about cooking. The semester began by preparing for cooking labs. The students learned about kitchen and food safety. They learned basic kitchen skills, cooking terminology, and about the equipment used in cooking. After the basic kitchen skills were learned, we continued on with learning to choose and prepare fruits and vegetables, dairy products, and eggs. For a bit of extra fun, we have been learning about and making cookies during December.

Second semester will be filled with learning more about baking, protein foods, and of course nutrition and food science concepts.

Life Skills/C4C

To better meet our students needs we are trying something different this year in 9th grade FCS. We are completing the life skills curriculum first semester and second semester we will be learning the C4C curriculum about careers and personal finance.

First semester, the 9th grade students have learned about abusive relationships and what to do if they or someone they know needs help. They have built upon the basic sewing skills they learned in FCS 8 and sewed a pair of boxer pajama shorts. In Life Skills they have also learned about cooking skills including correct measuring techniques, how to make quick breads and eggs. We also spent time discussing good nutrition and creating nutrient bodies to learn more in-depth information about individual nutrients.

Our goal second semester in C4C is to introduce students to the world of work. Students will explore 16 different career clusters. Each student researches and writes a paper, after picking a career that interests them. In addition, students practice completing a job application. Our semester ends with a unit on Personal Finance. We will discuss savings and interest, credit cards, checking accounts, and paychecks. In the personal finance unit, students will learn to read a paycheck stub, keep a checkbook register and balance a checking account. We also focus on responsible use of credit.

Parenting

We began the semester learning about family structure and function as well as the responsibilities of parenting. The parenting experience has been enhanced with the use of the school's Real Care Babies. Students participated in the Read Care Baby Think It Over simulation by parenting a life-like baby doll for 72 hours. Recently, we have followed the life-cycle from conception to birth. This semester we were able to visit the Preschool in Elmwood to read to the preschool students. Students were able to feel what being pregnant during the third trimester feels like through the use of the pregnancy simulator belly. Many of the students chose to wear the simulator belly throughout the day to have an idea of what it is like to be nine months pregnant.

FCS 8- 8th Grade

Students explored the textiles and sewing area of FCS to start the quarter. They learned about caring for their clothes and completed a laundry homework assignment. Students also gained experience on the sewing machines by sewing a pillowcase.

During the second half of the quarter students explored the interpersonal relationships area of FCS. Students learned about themselves as we discussed self-concept, personality, values, and goals. We then take that foundation to explore how those characteristics impact relationships and affect communication with each other.

Exploratory FCS 7th Grade

Students in this exploratory class get a small taste of some of the different areas of FCS curriculum. This quarter students learned about foods, nutrition, and practiced basic cooking skills. They also had lessons about table setting and table manners. They were also introduced to child development and care in a babysitting unit. Students learned about being a responsible babysitter, how to engage children in activities and how to handle emergencies. Our school nurse was a wonderful asset in helping to teach basic first aid that a babysitter needs to know.

SPECIAL EDUCATION **Nichole Justesen** **April Bacon**

Special education is specially designed instruction that addresses the unique needs of a student eligible to receive special education services. Special education is provided at no cost to parents and includes the related services a student needs to access her/his educational program. In grades 10-12, we begin to transition students for life after high school. Greater emphasis is placed on education goals and their impact on post-secondary plans, self-advocacy and time management skills. Students with disabilities require self-advocacy characteristics and skills for a successful transition from high school to post-secondary education. Developing self-understanding will help student's plan goals for themselves. Students with exceptionalities should reflect on their situations which will thereby develop self-awareness. Students who gain and develop a greater understanding of their own needs gain confidence to recognize their abilities. This will allow students to set realistic goals for themselves and provide direction in their post-secondary plans. It is important for students to be able to voice their opinion, address concerns, as well as, develop learning strategies for setting goals, time management and problem solving.

One of our focus points this year is improving students decoding skills. The definition of decoding is the "process of breaking down a word to its individual parts and determining

its word's pronunciation based on the common sound/letter patterns of English (Reading Horizons, 2019). Two decoding strategies that can help students find success are as follows:

One guardian consonant following the vowel, that consonant will move on to the next syllable.

When a vowel is followed by two guardian consonants, the consonants will split. The first consonant will stay in the first syllable, and the second consonant will move on the next syllable.

7-9 SPECIAL EDUCATION **Katie Steffen** **Jenna Kramer**

As the first semester of the 2022-2023 school year comes to an end, it gives us a chance to look back on all the progress our students have made. We have seen an array of growth from students across all grade levels. Our students are doing well with transitioning from elementary to middle school, and into high school.

Ms. Kramer joined the department this year, and has greatly enjoyed working with all our staff and students. She is a graduate from UNL, and is about to finish her very first semester teaching. She is also an Assistant Junior High Volleyball/Track coach. Ms. Kramer has been enjoying her time at Elmwood-Murdock and getting to know her students and see them progress towards their goals.

Mrs. Steffen - Extended Math: My students are gaining a deeper understanding of the concepts that they are learning in their core Math class. This allows my students to see more success on daily assignments, quizzes and tests. These students are also able to ask any questions that they may have.

Ms. Kramer - Study Skills 7: Seventh grade students are developing their studying skills and learning different strategies that they can use in their other classes. For example, they have looked at time management, effective listening, note taking, and how to find important information in various types of sources (online, books, videos, lectures). Next semester, these students will begin to learn about Executive Functioning Skills and how to improve these skills.

Ms. Kramer - Extended Reading: In this class, I typically take this opportunity to recap what is going on in their core English classes and go over any assignments that students may not understand. We work together to summarize what is going on in their novels they are reading as a class and work through discussion questions, or take time to review skills needed to complete IXLs.

We are looking forward to the second semester and all the opportunities of growth that our students will be presented with!

BIOLOGY/LIFE SCIENCE/ANATOMY **Justin Moline**

Biology classes have focused on understanding the scientific method, conversions, and structure and function in organisms. Students studied cell structures, energy, reproduction, differentiation, homeostasis, DNA structure and its importance for controlling cellular activity. The overarching structure and function theme has guided many of our investigations into the growth and development of organisms. Inquiry skills have been practiced during investigations associated with an enzyme activity, matter and energy cycling in

the environment, and structure and function.

The 7th grade Life Science classes have discussed the scientific process, compounds, cells, and organ systems of the body. Students have focused on the classification, organization, and relationships within these important concepts. The unit regarding cells included an understanding of sub-cellular structures, cellular functions, and exploratory labs using microscopes. We are currently investigating the organization, functions, and relationships of the different organ systems in the human body. Inquiry skills have been the focus of lab investigations for heart rate during different activities, measuring and comparing nutrients provided by certain foods, and lung capacity comparisons and analysis. Other topics that will be discussed throughout the school year include DNA and genetics, ecosystems and environmental studies, adaptations and relationships, behavior, and the classification system.

Anatomy examines the structures and functions of each organ system of the human body, and the complex interactions necessary to keep the body functioning properly. The first semester has included studies of cells, tissues, the integumentary system, and the skeletal system. The objectives of anatomy include gaining a fundamental knowledge of the location of different parts of the body, understanding the functions necessary to maintain homeostasis, examining the effects of external factors on the body, and investigating relationships between body structures. Research topics have included information regarding diseases and disorders, and unique characteristics of different body systems and structures. We are currently discussing components and functions of the endocrine system, and its relationship to other organ systems in maintaining homeostasis.

LIBRARY **JoDee Paulsen**

I once heard a saying: It is a beautiful thing when a career and a passion come together. This perfectly describes the life of the Elmwood-Murdock Library/Media Specialist. As a child, I struggled in reading. I never had a book that I loved. I checked out the same book over and over because I didn't want to waste my time looking at something I was never going to read. The scariest moments for me was when we all had to read aloud because I knew there would be groans and snickers from my peers when it was my turn.

Fortunately, for me, one book changed my world. I fell in love with the characters and the storyline and I chose to read for the first time in my life. The more I read, the better I became at it. I had to do the work and most importantly, I had to want to do the work. This helped me find my passion. I love to read, but my passion truly lies in helping students find the book that will make them lifelong readers. I am very fortunate that I have the perfect job. I know that not every student is going to love the process of reading—especially in today's world of video games, streaming videos and immediate gratification. However, if I can make a student who HATES to read or in my case, is scared of reading and make it a pleasant experience, then I have done my job.

This year, my time is split fairly equally between the two buildings. I spend the morning in Elmwood teaching library lessons to grades PK-6. During that time I read aloud with them, we complete activities to help them enhance their comprehension skills and I reinforce and encourage independent reading using Accelerated Reader. In the afternoon I go to Murdock where I am available

to assist students with their book needs as well as teaching two classes of Extended Reading to 7th and 8th Graders. During those classes, we explore a variety of literature pieces, practice comprehension strategies and get the opportunity for independent reading

HEALTH/PHYSICAL EDUCATION **Aaron Pryor**

The Health and Physical Education Department at Elmwood-Murdock Junior/Senior High School aims to provide students the opportunities to gain the knowledge, tools, and skills to be physically fit individuals for the rest of their lives.

Classes include: 7th Grade PE/Health, 8th Grade PE/Health, PE II, PE III, and PE IV.

7th and 8th Grade PE/Health
During the 2022-23 school year, the 7th and 8th Grade students are spending time in both the gym as well as the Health classroom. Topics covered in Health include: Your Total Health, Health Risks/Behaviors, Decision Making, Goal Setting, Skeletal/Muscular Systems, Creating Fitness Plans, Nutrition, and Meal Planning, Mental and Emotional Health, Managing Stress, How Tobacco Affects the Body, The Respiratory System, Tobacco/E-Cigarette Use, as well as Refusal Skills. The 8th Grade students also have an opportunity to learn about various weightlifting exercises as well as the proper technique needed to perform them safely and correctly while heading to the Fitness Center once a week.

In the gym, points of emphasis include: cooperative team skills, strategic communication, and sportsmanship, as well as full participation in the large group setting. Students have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of sport and fitness based units. They also participate in a variety of daily warm-up activities from dynamic stretching to plyometrics and agility.

PE II, PE III, and PE IV
The classes offered to High School students cover a wide range of fitness concepts, games, activities, and weight training. Once again, our goal is to provide these students with the opportunities to explore a variety of things to help them become physically knowledgeable individuals as they move forward with their lives.

Our PE II class participates in a variety of both sports based as well as team cooperative games. This class is also building on the introductory weight training skills they've learned in the past as we are progressing through a weight lifting program in the Fitness Center twice a week. This balance provides a well-rounded introductory physical education experience at the High School level.

The PE III class provides students the opportunities to learn about and participate in a variety of individual, team, and lifetime sports. The curriculum aims to introduce games to students and give them the opportunities to practice the skills they will need to fully participate in the activity. PE III also includes a weekly trip to the Fitness Center.

PE IV is our Strength and Conditioning class that takes place in the Fitness Center. Students participate in our Knight Power Weightlifting program. Students track their daily progress on log sheets that detail their daily workout. Core lifts such as: Bench Press, Squat, and Hang Clean are supplemented with auxiliary lifts to increase overall strength. Students test out multiple times

throughout the school year and also complete Mid-Semester Progress Checks in which they examine their workouts, looking for trends, strengths, weaknesses, etc

BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY **Laura Rikli**

COMPUTER 7
Computer 7 students have been working towards improving their keyboarding technique, speed and accuracy throughout the semester. Students have been completing lessons through EduTyping and taking timed writing tests to gauge improvements in both their speed and accuracy. The 7th grade class also learns how to key, format, and proofread various business documents during the last few weeks of the semester.

COMPUTER 8
Students have been learning basic computer terminology while also working on various projects using Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Publisher, Canva, and Google Drive (Docs, Drawings, Forms and Slides). They have also learned how to create and properly format various documents such as tables of content, tabs, and tables.

INFO TECH 1
The 9th grade class has spent the 1st semester working on assignments that apply basic and advanced features of Word & Excel. They have advanced their skills in Word and Excel by applying the basic skills they learned in 7th and 8th grade and taking them to advanced levels with newer, more challenging tools and methods. Next semester they will learn how to create a database and run queries & reports using Microsoft Access. They will also learn how to perform a mail merge by integrating Word & Access. Students will also learn basic and advanced features of Power Point. Finally, they will end the school year by working on several fun projects in Adobe Photoshop.

DIGITAL DESIGN & MEDIA
This semester students have been creating multimedia projects using the Adobe Creative Suite software. Students spent the first semester learning advanced design tools in Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator. Next semester they will learn how to create and edit videos in Adobe Premiere Pro while using Adobe After Effects to enhance the videos with animated video, background and text effects. Students will also learn how to build websites with Wix and create animations using Adobe Animate and Character Animator.

PERSONAL FINANCE
In this quarter class, the seniors have been learning about the skills necessary for financial independence after high school. Topics covered in this class are: transportation, housing, budgeting & consumerism, credit, and insurance. Students are engaged through various projects such as housing & apartment search activities; paper vs. spreadsheet budgets; generic vs. name brand consumerism activities; and understanding how to analyze credit card offers and credit reports.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS / YEARBOOK
Students in this class learn how to design their own Yearbook spreads using the Walworth publishing site. They are responsible for taking photographs at events throughout the year and editing their photographs before adding them to their assigned spreads. Students also learn how to use the Striv equipment to broadcast home varsity sporting events. Finally, students spend time using Adobe Premiere Pro to create and edit news-cast segments, highlight videos from games, create promotional videos for special events,

and to recognize students who have earned honors within our school.

MATH & HISTORY **Lisa Schmidt**

There are so many wonderful things going on each and every day in this building. Here are a few that are happening in the Social Studies and math room.

In Algebra 8 we have been working with linear equations and graphs. To put these concepts into perspective, we are researching the costs of hybrid vs traditional gas vehicles to determine where the breakeven point is in cost. We are also trying to determine if we bought a hybrid, could we save enough money in gas costs in a year to make one payment on the loan of the hybrid vehicle. Students have had fun building their cars online and are now working on figuring out costs associated with vehicle ownership.

Freshmen in Algebra I have been working hard with reviewing concepts learned in previous years. This group of students is showing that they are willing to try new ideas and ways of solving problems. This group is one of the hardest working groups of math students I've taught and they really apply information to understand the concepts they are being taught. The first semester will end with a project that has students look at answering the question: "How much money do you earn for 1,000,000 streams on Spotify (and other platforms)."

American History students have been learning about the foundations of the freedoms of Americans. Eighth graders studied Colonial America, the American Revolution and have studied the weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation and how that led to the writing of the Constitution. Students are finishing up the semester with a project that shows their understanding of the Bill of Rights and how it applies to the citizens of the United States.

Seventh graders have most recently been studying the Scientific Revolution, the Enlightenment and how those two ideas are related. Students have also learned about the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Age of Exploration in the Americas, Asia and Africa. So far, a favorite with this seventh-grade class is showing their understanding of concepts learned in the classroom with projects. They will be ending the semester with a project over the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment.

Geography students are celebrating the end of the first semester by learning about the cultures of different Latin American countries. So far, we have enjoyed learning about the music, dance, food and clothing of many of the countries in Central and South America. Students have shown what they have learned by teaching us some Latin American dances, listening to music that is traditionally from South America, learning and practicing some soccer skills and sharing part of the cuisine of South America. We will move into learning about Europe when we return from the holiday break.

BUSINESS **Jacob Shaffer**

Accounting I
Throughout the course, students have been learning the "language of business": accounting. Students have gained experience in accounting by journalizing and posting transactions to special journals, preparing financial statements, and completing the other steps of the accounting cycle. By focusing on a service business organized as a proprietorship

and a merchandising business organized as a corporation, students have gained insight into a broad range of accounting concepts.

Critical Issues

As seniors, students take this course to develop career-readiness skills and create a senior project. At the beginning of the semester, students learned the importance of community service and helping others. Students then transitioned into researching colleges and careers and constructing job application materials. After creating and revising the job application materials, students had the privilege of participating in a mock job interview with a member of the community. In the second half of the semester, students learn concepts related to taxation and meeting management and create and present their senior projects.

Digital Design

Students in Digital Design have the opportunity to learn how to use several Adobe programs. This year, students have been able to learn the ins and outs of Photoshop and Illustrator. With Photoshop, students have incorporated exciting effects into editing photos. With Illustrator, students are learning how to create their own designs with shapes and lines. Next semester, students will learn more about Adobe programs, such as Premiere Pro and After Effects.

Entrepreneurship

At the beginning of the semester, students first learned the risks involved with being an entrepreneur and the strengths of well-known, successful entrepreneurs. From those moments, students have been developing a business plan of their own aspirations. While gaining knowledge about various forms of business ownerships, economics, and marketing, students have created parts of their business plan, which will be finished at the end of the course.

Introduction to Business

Students have been learning various aspects of a business and its operations. From understanding how to manage and market a business to understanding macro- and micro-economic impacts, students are gaining insights into successfully participating in the business world. Students are also learning the value of ethics and the importance of building positive employee-employer relationships.

Personal Finance

This course covers a wide range of financial topics. At the beginning of the course, students first learned the importance of setting short-term, medium-term, and long-term financial and life goals. Gaining an understanding of values and goals allows each student to begin outlining a budget for their current or future situations. Students have also gained knowledge about savings, investments, and being a smart consumer. At the end of the course, students learn various economics concepts, such as different types of economic systems and supply and demand.

Senior English

In order to improve writing, reading, and speaking skills, this class heavily focuses on proper grammar for two-thirds of the school year and expands to focus on written communication for the last third of the school year. The grammar portion of the curriculum includes learning how to use the various parts of speech, commas, and punctuation in several situations. In the spring the students will take their grammar knowledge and apply it while writing.

SOCIAL STUDIES **Lance Steffen**

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

American Government is a one-semester course for seniors. An emphasis is placed on developing an understanding of national and state governments.

This first quarter is focused on the Constitutional Foundations of our government as well as the structure of our National Government. To do this, we have looked at theory of government as well as the role each of our three branches of government plays.

The second quarter focuses on individual liberties given in the Bill of Rights as well as our political party system and what each party officially believes. The goal is to relate this information to students in a way that will be applicable to them as a voter in our society.

AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

This year in American Experience, we have divided the class into two separate sections, to better reflect student knowledge of American History and English/Music. Among the many topics we have discussed in the history segment of American Experience, the juniors have studied the European exploration and colonization of America. We also learned how we gained our independence and how slavery shaped our young nation before pushing our country into the Civil War by the end of the semester.

Second semester plans include a study of the Industrial Revolution in the US, the changing role of the US on the world's stage with America's role in WWI & WWII. We will also discuss the impact of the Great Depression, Civil Rights Era, and the cultural effects of the Cold War in America as well as more contemporary topics like the War on Terror and more recent American History.

WORLD HISTORY

Sophomores in World History are learning that while historical events are unique, they are often driven by similar repeated forces. The course identifies several cultures and civilizations throughout history as well as major achievements of those cultures along the way. As we discuss the history of the world, our major goal is to incorporate the stories of as many cultures around the world as we can. This is a class devoted to the story of all of us and how we reached the modern age.

The first semester of World History focused on the Beginnings of Civilization, The Establishment of River Civilizations, The First Age of Empires, & Rome. So far in the timeline of the world, we have reached roughly 500 CE. For the second semester, our goal is to discuss the major events associated with Islam and Eastern Conquerors, the Middle Ages in Europe contrasted with West African peoples, The Age of Exploration and the people involved, and finishing with the Enlightenment Period in Europe with a focus on social and ideological change associated with this time period.

PHYSICAL & EARTH SCIENCE **Laura Stock**

The Physical and Earth Science classes at Elmwood-Murdock Junior/Senior High have been keeping the laboratory and classrooms busy this year. The 8th grade Earth Science classes completed units on experimental design, matter and measurement, the solar system, the earth-moon system and finally, Earth's atmosphere. During October and November, the students learned about the solar system. We created a scale model of the

solar system down the hallway with a sun as tall as the well. This made Pluto the size of a pea! We designed experiments to model the greenhouse effect on Venus and Earth. We used our PASCO temperature sensors to model why Earth experiences four distinct seasons and used Earth and moon "lollipops" and online simulations to discover why we observe moon phases on Earth. In December, we learned about air pressure by conducting experiments like crushing cans and vacuuming sealing our peers in trash bags. We will utilize this knowledge to springboard into our next unit: weather. We will also study the Earth's structure, minerals and rocks, fossils, plate tectonics, earthquakes and volcanoes by the end of the year.

The 9th grade class, Intro to Physics/Earth Science, began the year with a review of scientific methods and experimentation. We learned about waves by using slinkies and online simulations. We used our knowledge of wave energy and light to explore the universe. We learned about a star's life cycle, and what it would be like if we fell in a black hole (Terrifying. 0/10. Would not recommend). Then we classified galaxies and learn how the universe began. Then we transitioned into motion and forces. We used our PASCO motion and force sensors probe wave to model mathematical and graphical relationships of Newton's Laws of Motion. We finished the semester designing balloon-powered mini cars that traveled at least six meters. Next semester, we'll then crash our cars into the wall, measuring the accelerations and force of impact with our cell phones. We will design bumpers for our cars to explore momentum and will then design a container to save an egg from a 12 foot drop.

Chemistry is sometimes difficult because we often learn about things that we can't physically observe, like protons or electrons. The Chemistry classes began the year studying matter and its observable physical properties, such as density. Students used this knowledge to experimentally determine the percentage of sugar in Pepsi and Mountain Dew. It is always fun to see the look on students' faces at the end of the lab when we actually measure out 77 grams of sugar, which is the amount of sugar in a 20 oz. bottle of Mountain Dew. Students also explored other physical properties of matter and utilized these properties to separate mixtures. The highlight of the semester was the student-led experiment to determine a way to remove elemental iron from Total® brand cereal. Every year I am blown away by the creativity of our students in solving problems and this year's juniors were no exception. We then ventured into the sub-atomic world of protons, neutrons and electrons and completed the semester by designing and constructing element ornaments to decorated our classroom Chemis"tree." The ornaments were so creative this year!

In Physics, we kicked off the year studying vectors and solving a variety of problems involving vector addition of forces. We then studied motion, particularly velocity and acceleration. Students designed and conducted experiments to explore how reaction time might be affected by cold, video game play or by receiving rewards. They gathered data and used kinematics equations to calculate reaction time. We learned about projectile motion and used our knowledge to work on three different versions of "hit the ball in the cup." We finished the semester building our new Pitsco TETRIX robots that we obtained from an ESU grant.

ART Linda Trundle

Art students in Junior and Senior High have just finished a pottery unit in which they made pinch pots, coil pottery, slab pottery, cupcake shaped boxes, beads, food sculpture, snail sculptures, and leaves as well as practiced using the pottery wheel and learned about the firing process.

We had a guest artist this fall demonstrating leather working for a day. We had a field trip to Mr Miller's woodworking shop where the students had a wonderful opportunity to explore the artist's workshop and ask lots of questions about the process from start to finish. Special thanks to Mr Miller for sharing his expertise with us. If you know of any other local artists that would be willing to share their knowledge with us, please let me know.

Other things we learned this semester included acrylic painting, string art, one, two, and three point perspective drawing techniques, Old English and Italic calligraphy, watercolor painting, ink drawing, scratchboard, leather tooling, and copper burnishing. We researched artists and art history. We spent some time outdoors in the fall drawing trees, buildings and landscapes. Thanks to the Methodist Church for letting us sit on their lawn and draw their building from different angles.

Elementary artists of every grade did watercolor paintings this fall. Some of the classes have been doing scratch board, making finger crocheted coat hangers, as well as finger weaving.

The 3rd graders read the theme story and made Christmas decorations for a room at the Aldrich House again this season. Each 3rd grader was awarded a gift certificate to go to the Aldrich House this holiday season. We hope you can take the time to go observe their decorations.

The 4th graders are working on illustrating another of Bess Streeter Aldrich's short stories into a children's book. Look for "Juno's Swans" to be for sale this spring.

Thanks to the bank at Murdock and at Elmwood for displaying our art work this semester.

Thanks to each of you for supporting the art program and your student artists.

ONE ACT PLAY PRODUCTION Keri Hogue Marcus Manley

This was another exciting year for the Elmwood-Murdock drama program! We prepared and performed "The Birch Moon" which was an original story written this year by Mark Hogue Jr., Marcus Manley, and Keri Hogue. We had 54 students 7th through 12th grade involved in many different capacities with a variety of talents.

There were a variety of highlights to our season. At Norfolk, we competed against all Class levels and received Runner-Up! Students recognized for their acting were: Haylee Josoff, Wyatt Baker, Sara Kicak, Lily Pope, Madie Justesen, Hanna Josoff, Mia Rikli, Bri Ross, Macy Howard, Averi Hogue, Ava Hohman, Grace Jacobsen, Nolan Stroy, and Rylie Gordon. We also won the Best Tech Award overall!

Our second competition was at York High School where we SWEPT all of the Awards! This was a first in our program his-

tory! We won Best Ensemble; Best Hair and Makeup Design; Best Tech; and we were Division Champions! Wyatt Baker was awarded Best Supporting Actor and Lily Pope was awarded Best Actress in our entire division. Other students recognized for their acting were: Haylee Josoff, Wyatt Baker, Sara Kicak, Will Platt, Hanna Josoff, Lily Pope, Madie Justesen, Bri Ross, Mia Rikli, Macy Howard, Averi Hogue, Ava Hohman, and Rylie Gordon.

We then competed at David City Aquinas High School and placed first as a team along with another award for Best Tech! Wyatt Baker and Hanna Josoff were awarded Best Actor and Actress in our Division as well. Other students recognized for their outstanding acting were: Haylee Josoff, Wyatt Baker, Will Platt, Hanna Josoff, Lily Pope, Mia Rikli, Nolan Stroy, and Averi Hogue.

At ECNC, we were the Conference Champions as well! It was the first time in 27 years we have captured the Champion title for our Conference. It was a great day to be a Knight! Wyatt Baker and Haylee Josoff were recognized as the Best Actor and Actress in the entire Conference! Overall, we collected 17 Superior Scores and three Best Tech Awards for our season At our C2 District Competition, our team received the Champion Plaque to place first in our district! We were back to the State Competition for the third year! We also received the Best Tech Award in the District! Our Traveling Tech Crew Members:

Harrison Koehn, Leo Rikli, Blake Lavington, Payton Haase, Aryana Wall, Will Fox, Grayson Schroll, Christian Brettmann, Nolan Platt, Ryerson Kastens, Brody Marsh, Mya Breedlove, Eva Stansell, Eva Knippelmeyer, Ellie Meyer, Katie Morris, Ella Stroy, Caitlyn Hosier, and Ziva Arent. These honors were a major highlight of our season, and the students continued to grow as performers and a community.

Finally, we went back to the Norfolk stage and placed third in the state again this year. Students recognized at the state level for their acting were: Haylee Josoff, Wyatt Baker, Hanna Josoff, Lily Pope, and Averi Hogue. It was an amazing accomplishment for these students and the entire team to begin and end their season on the Norfolk stage. Thanks, again, to everyone who came and supported us at Norfolk and watched our performance online.

Our fifth annual "Dinner and Dress Rehearsal" catered by Round the Bend Steakhouse was another success! Kim Arent, Michelle Meyer, Amy Rikli, Anne Pope, Carae Oehlerking and their teams took the lead on this event, and it had another overwhelming response! Thank you to the entire community for your support! Wow! We are so fortunate! We sold just under 300 meals which will go towards future expenditures to build our program. This year, combined with careful stewardship, our expenses were just around \$4,000 to have a quality, competitive production. Since we are a self-funded program, your donations and monetary support are so important and valued. Over half of our costumes and pieces were sewn by Tami Pleiss. Gina Frank helped with various costume pieces, props, and anything else that was needed to help make the students successful. They volunteer their talents, time, and their dedication is evident to help our students shine on the stage.

Our Public Performances had about 600 in combined attendance! The students were so encouraged to feel the support from the audi-

ence! Your attendance and generosity were greatly appreciated! The overall audience support we had this year at all of the competitions including Districts AND State is the highest we have ever had. It doesn't go unnoticed, and our students are forever grateful. Please keep coming to our performances! We love it!

THANK YOU, again, for your continued support to help these students shine on stage and grow as performers and leaders. Our sincerest thanks goes to the dedicated students, parents, teachers, community, administration, and school board. Additional thanks to the Murdock and Elmwood volunteer fire departments for the amazing send-off to our state competition the last three years! For now, the "Show must go on!" as we prepare for One-Act 2023!

FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS OF AMERICA (FBLA)

**Laura Rikli
Jacob Shaffer**

During the summer, 18 students traveled to Chicago to compete in the National Leadership Conference. Students prepared at the beginning of the summer to finalize their projects and perfect their presentations. In between competitions, students listened to motivational speakers and took in the sights of the Windy City.

At the end of September, our local officers participated in the state's Fall Leadership Conference, which was held at Midland University. At this conference, our members were inspired and learned how to lead in our organization and school.

In the middle of September, our Community Service Project planned and held a community event alongside Syracuse Area Health and the Elmwood-Murdock Merchants' Association (EMMA). The health fair was organized to provide community members a free opportunity to conduct several types health screenings and receive various items of health-related information. It was a success, and we hope the event continues to grow in the years to come!

FCCLA Lisa Hynes

Students in Family Career & Community Leaders of America were glad to be able to attend in person district and state workshops this year. Fourteen students from our chapter attended the District Leadership Conference at Peru State College in November. Averi Hogue is serving as the District Vice President of Recreation. She was responsible for creating activities for the District 1 attendees to get to know members from other chapters in the district.

Our chapter continues to belong to the Teens in the Driver's Seat program. This is a program to help make teens aware of the dangers of distracted driving and other unsafe practices while they are on the road to prevent accidents. Macy Howard and Dakota Glasshoff chair this program. For their efforts during the 2021-22 school year they earned a plaque and \$200 spending money for the chapter.

Students are currently busy working on Students Taking Action and Recognition projects to present in January at our District competition. We are looking forward to a successful and fun second semester and attending our State Leadership Conference (SLC) in person. In April 2022, 10 members attended the SLC to compete and learn. Members Harrison Koehn and Brooke Goudie were the State Champions in their STAR events, Teach and Train and Food Innova-

tions, respectively. This earned them the opportunity to compete at the National Leadership Conference in San Diego, CA. Others competing in State STAR were Dakota Glasshoff (silver medal), Charles Cawley (silver medal), and Michael Hynes (bronze medal). Harrison Koehn also interviewed for a term on the State Peer Officer Team. Harrison Koehn competed at the National Leadership Conference (NLC) in San Diego, June 28-July 4, 2022. Harrison brought home a gold medal and overall 11th place finish in his division of Teach and Train. Michael Hynes also attended the conference. Harrison and Michael were able to take part in FCCLA training sessions as well as do a little touring while in San Diego. While at NLC they were able to visit the San Diego Zoo, Coronado Island, the Little Italy neighborhood, USS Midway Museum, and meet new friends from other chapters. Not all learning took place in formal meeting sessions. Skills such as how to use public transportation, UBER, and navigate air travel were learned.

6th GRADE QUIZ BOWL Diane Vice

The 6th Grade Quiz Bowl team consists of Layton Bornemeier, Kourtney Dowding, Petra Homan, Megan Moline, Kyler Rikli, Quinn Ross, Kate Stock and Levi Wilson. They have participated in two Cass County Quad meets so far, earning first place in November and second place in December. They will participate in two more Cass County meets in January and February. On December 6th a five girl team of Layton, Kate, Megan, Kourtney and Petra participated in a 32-team tournament with schools from Gretna, Millard, Elkhorn, Plattsmouth and other Class A and B schools at ESU#3. They won five matches and lost two, coming in tied for fifth place. This is the best Elmwood Murdock has ever come in a ESU tournament. They will be participating in another ESU meet in February.

JH/HS QUIZ BOWL Lisa Hynes

Junior High students have been able to compete in the Cass County Quad competitions once again at Conestoga High School. Members of the 7th grade team are Bennett Nielsen, Landon Tuttle, Jonah Rikli, Levi Rikli, Caden Pecha, Brandt Jacobson, Lauren Ashlock, Liana Rikli, and Elliot Stock. Members of the 8th grade team are Dylan Bornemeier, Ellie Meyer, Eva Stansell, Grayson Schroll, Carson Towle, Clayton Fletcher, and Miles Husk.

This year we have a Varsity LifeSmarts team, Grace Jacobson, Hannah Peterson, Drake Clements, Will Fox, and Trevin McKenzie. We will be competing at a to be determined date during second semester. LifeSmarts is the nation's premier consumer program. Now in its 28th year, Lifesmarts consistently challenges students on core consumer topics and helps them develop critical thinking skills. Participants focus on five key topic areas: consumer rights and responsibilities, the environment, health & safety, personal finance, and technology & workforce preparation. The goal of LifeSmarts is to create consumer savvy young people who will be well equipped for adult life in today's complex, global marketplace.

EM quiz bowl members Nathan Miller, Garrett Pleiss, Drake Clements, and Trevin McKenzie participated in the B103.7 On-Air Quiz Bowl contest during second semester 2022. They played many competitive teams to make it to the championship round unde-

feated. Unfortunately, they lost a double elimination championship contest to place second in the entire tournament. The students will again be competing in the on-air tournament starting in January 2023.

High school quiz bowl team members include 9th graders, Will Fox, Aryana Wall, Hannah Peterson, Meighan Smith, and Aiden Meisinger. Tenth grade team members are Madison Ashlock, Kayden Bacon, Drake Clements, Isabelle Halferty, Averi Hogue, Michael Hynes, Grace Jacobson, Abraham Jones, and Trevin McKenzie. Leading the team are juniors Nathan Miller and Garrett Pleiss who have been members since 6th grade.

This year Elmwood Murdock will be hosting the ECNC Quiz Bowl tournament on Monday, March 6, 2023. Both our junior high and high school teams will be competing. Spectators are welcome to watch our students compete at the tournament.

SPANISH CLUB Manuel Camina

The same as other years, Elmwood-Murdock has a Spanish Club. Several kids save some of their free time to join us and share the culture of Spanish speaking countries, enjoying movies with lots of nachos and salsa, and we have lots of ideas for this school year. So far we have visited a haunted house in Omaha during Halloween, we had game nights, decorated for Navidad, and in the future we will do activities related to fútbol, learn how to dance salsa, go ice skating, cook, mini golfing, curling and so many more fun things.

Check your calendars to see when we are having a meeting and feel free to join us. If you want to be part of the Spanish Club talk to our "oficiales" or any other member of El Club de Español, including Mr. Camina.

SCIENCE CLUB Laura stock

Science Club is off to another great start, adding several new members this year. We kicked off the year with a "Make your Own Ice Cream Social. In September, we made rubber band powered cars. In early October, we helped the Lower Platte South NRD host a Nature Family Night event at the elementary school. Our students were able to help elementary students learn about spider, camouflage and environments, and study insects of the prairie.

In the same month, we held a science dissected cow eyes and carved jack o' lanterns. In December, we made crystal Christmas trees. Next semester, we will begin by preparing for the annual Science Olympiad competition that will be held in April.

ART CLUB Linda Trundle

Art Club meets monthly, usually on the second Wednesday, right after school for a couple hours. We just finished making gingerbread houses for the holiday meeting. Other projects include making wreaths, acrylic painting, finger knitting, and fabric covered books and picture frames.

New members and friends are always welcome to join second semester.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT COUNCIL Nichole Justesen

Homecoming Activities
In September, we organized Spirit Week and Homecoming with the EM Cheerleaders.

Below is a list of activities that were planned by Student Council:

Monday – Pajamas Day
Tuesday – Class Color
Wednesday – Decades (50, 60, 70, 80, 90)
Thursday – Western Day / Adam Sandler Day
Friday – All School Pep Rally
Homecoming Court 2022:
Karly Anderson / Cade Hosier
Ella Zierott / Reid Fletcher
Haylee Josoff / Henry Coleman
Crown Bearers –
Etta Frerichs – Daughter of Monte & Lynae Frerichs
Drew Backemeyer – Sons of Jeff & Lindsay Backemeyer
King – Reid Fletcher
Queen – Karly Anderson

VETERANS DAY

Elmwood-Murdock Public Schools honored all local veterans by inviting them to attend our annual, “Veterans Day” programs. The program was held at the Elmwood-Murdock High School, on Thursday, November 11, 2022. The JR/SR High School program began at 10:00 a.m. at the high school and 1:15 at the elementary school. Lunch for veterans and their spouses were served lunch after the program. Special performances by Elmwood-Murdock Band and choir were performed. The guest speaker was Senator Tom Brewer. He is a retired US Army Colonel and current State Senator. Senator Brewer has served our nation for over 37 years. He grew up on and near the Pine Ridge Reservation. He is a member of the Oglala Lakota Sioux Tribe. He began his career as an enlisted man in the Nebraska Army National Guard. Sen. Brewer attended college at Doane University in Crete on an ROTC scholarship. His service in the military included six tours in Afghanistan. His last tour was cut short after his vehicle was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade while he was changing a tire. Brewer suffered severe injuries, including shrapnel wounds, a punctured eye and shredded ligaments. He holds two Purple Hearts. Sen. Brewer is a Republican member of the Nebraska State Legislature representing the 43rd district comprising thirteen counties in the Western Nebraska Sandhills. He was first elected in 2016 and is the first Senator of Native American descent to serve in Nebraska’s Unicameral.

FOOD DRIVE

The High School Student Council launched the food drive on November 17th. The food drive was a combined effort with the Elementary, Jr. High, and High School Student Council and the patrons of Elmwood and Murdock. The Canned Food Drive ended on Dec 17th. Our goal was to collect 3000 cans at each building. The winner of this year’s food drive received an ice cream party and first in line for lunch for semester 2. The seventh grade class collected the most cans/dollars for first lunch and junior class collected the most for 2nd lunch! Both buildings reached their food drive goal so students were released at 1:00 for Christmas Break. The students did an amazing job, they collected approximated \$2700 dollars and 1100 cans between the two buildings to support our local food pantry.

The student council has also had an opportunity to work with the elementary Knight Families every other month. This has been a great way to form positive peer groups with our younger students as they transition through high school.

JUNIOR HIGH STUDENT COUNCIL Heather Bornemeier

The Junior High Student Council members have been working to collaborate with other school groups to spread kindness and positivity throughout the district. We have teamed up with the elementary Knight families and enjoy interacting with all grades. We also attended the UNL Life Skills and Sportsman-

ship Pep Rally along with the Husker Women’s home opener in November. The Junior High Student Council continues to meet monthly and plans and organizes projects and events in order to continue to strengthen overall leadership.

ELEMENTARY STUDENT COUNCIL Cindy Backemeyer

This year we have 21 students on the student council and they are a wonderful group to work and plan with. The sixth graders are Layton Bornemeier, Kourtney Dowding, Megan Moline, Ella Platt, Jimmy Piitz, Haddie Zierott, and Payton Vogt. The fifth graders are Bo Backemeyer, Kinley Dorr, Kade Haertel, Izzy Olson, Lane Meister, Aubrey Stewart, and Madden Vogt. The fourth graders are Grant Bornemeier, Cooper Gordon, Millie Hendricks, Caleb Kraeger, John Mortensen, Eliza Piitz, and Elsie Schweitzer. We have about two meetings per month. All the students have shown a strong sense of community, responsibility, and work ethic. They are always willing to help the school in any way that they can.

This year, the STUCO members were asked to help at Family Reading Night. They helped with activities, setting up the snack table, and laying out books.

The Student Council involved the whole school in a play they created for Grandparent’s Day. This included many hours of practice learning lines, bringing props, and performing for the Grandparents.

In December, we collected money and canned goods for the food drive. Our school goal was 3,500 items, but we exceeded our goal. We can’t express our appreciation enough to all the families and organizations who donated to this project.

Running the school store and concessions for school ball games keeps the STUCO members busy, but it allows us to practice our money counting skills and learn important customer service techniques.

Along with all of these fun activities, members have shown their creativity and organization in different aspects. Stuco members have designed posters to hang around the school to advertise and promote the theme days for the school.

We are so thankful to have the opportunity to help our school and community. With a great group of students, we cannot wait to see what the rest of the year will bring.

UNIFIED BOWLING April Bacon

This is our district’s fifth year participating in unified bowling. We were excited to have two teams competing this year. The purpose of unified bowling is to promote social inclusion through a shared sport. Unified bowling joins people with and without intellectual disabilities on the same team. It was inspired by a simple principle: training together and playing together is a quick path to friendship and understanding. Having a sport in common is just one more way that preconceptions and false ideas are swept away.

The district had eight students participating in unified bowling this year. The season is packed into the month of November. The bowling team practiced once a week after school at Papio Bowl in Papillion, NE. The season consisted of five regular season matches and then districts. The team bowled six games each match using a bakers format. The team traveled to Lincoln, Omaha, Te-

cumseh, Elkhorn and Fremont for the matches. Post season play consisted of a district match in Elkhorn. Athletes and partners both improved their skills during the season but more importantly had fun doing a sport that they can continue playing into adulthood.

JUNIOR HIGH FOOTBALL Don Brothers

The Junior high football team had a great year. They finished the season undefeated. The players made great progress during the year and we look forward to having another good season

HIGH SCHOOL VOLLEYBALL Nichole Justesen

Season recap –

The 2022 Elmwood-Murdock volleyball team consisted of 16 girls! We finished the 2022 varsity season with 18-15 record. The JV/C team finished with a record of 25-18. The girls worked hard over the summer by attending camps, open gym, and summer league. The girls started lifting and volleyball workouts in May and continued through August. The main focus was team unity, increased strength, quickness, and showing up! Our team motto was Dedication/Motivation, #1%better. Assistant coaches were Megan Barnes, Emma Leone, and Alicia Dieter. This year our community outreach development focused on cancer awareness and how it impacts our volleyball and school communities. Our team decided to support a local family within our school community who has been directly impacted by cancer. Roxanne Kastens is married to Ben Kastens and has three sons in the EM school system. Roxanne was diagnosed with invasive ductile carcinoma this summer. Roxanne worked at the EM school district as a business manager for 14 years. She currently serves as the head of Platteview Public Schools business department. Roxanne is a cancer superhero to the Elmwood-Murdock volleyball team because of the impact she has on the lives around her. This year we raised a total of \$2175.00 for our cancer drive!

A special thank you to Jolean Piitz for designing and printing the Rally4Roxanne cancer drive shirts. Also, thank you to Mia Rikli for donating her labor and for her amazing job of making the BC Awareness quilt. The quilt was done by Acorn Ridge Quilting.

Our team goals for 2022 focused on high efficiency serving and serve receive, as well as, creating a positive team-oriented court. We worked toward achieving our goal during the off-season by bringing in Gwen Egbert, Assistant Coach for Arizona State University, to develop our passing/serving skills in grades 7th through 12th. July was a big push for the EM volleyball program. Our JV and varsity teams competed at the UNO Team camp and Iowa State Volleyball Team Camp. The varsity finished 3rd in the Top 10 Kearney C2 volleyball tournament. We were small in numbers, but everyone on the team impacted our success at both the junior varsity and varsity level. Our team goals include 88% serving and 80% passing accuracy and a team 3.6 GPA. We ended the year at 88.9% serving and 93% serve receive efficiency. The Knights collected 957 kills, 912 assists, 1593digs, 97 solo blocks and 246 ace serves. Our varsity GPA is 3.74!

I was very proud of all of the girls’ effort and commitment during the season. We had no seniors out for volleyball, as a result, the underclassman were instrumental in our successful year. Their goal was to get 1%better each time we touch a ball. Our last two games showed how much the girls loved the

game of volleyball. The girls won their sub-districts, but fell short in their district final game against Meridian. We accomplished several milestones this year: Tatum Backemeyer 1000 career digs and Laney Frahm 1000 career assists.

JUNIOR HIGH VOLLEYBALL **Jen Justus**

This season there were 26 girls on the team. We were able to play most games in an A, B, and C team format, to allow more opportunities. This year we had to learn what our role was, and that each player has to contribute to the team in their role; whatever that may be. Each and every player made improvements from start to finish. The girls worked hard every day to get better as a teammate, player, and person. They pushed themselves to get better every day, and for the 8th graders to prepare for high school volleyball, both mentally and physically. We had a great season. Thank you to Coach Kramer for all of her knowledge and skills that she brought to the program. Thank you to the parents for all the help and support, and good luck to those continuing into high school sports next year.

HIGH SCHOOL CROSS COUNTRY **Cayle Burbach**

The 2022 High School Cross Country team had a very successful season this fall. During the 10 meet season, many personal best times were set for the high school team consisting of Brianna Ross, Trevin McKenzie, Blake Lavington, and Will Fox. Over the course of 3.1 miles or 5 kilometers, these athletes showed strong perseverance and determination. Individually, Brianna's highest placing was 6th at the Weeping Water Invitational. For the boys, Trevin ran his fastest race at just under 20 minutes (19 minutes, 49 seconds) at the Ft. Calhoun Invitational. Blake showed positive growth throughout his freshman season and placed 53rd at the D-1 District Meet. Will also completed his freshman season and his fastest time was nearly three minutes faster by the end of the season, a huge improvement!

Junior High Cross Country **Cayle Burbach**

The 2022 Junior High Cross Country team experienced great success this season. Junior High courses vary in length from 1.25 to 1.8 miles (2 kilometers to 3 kilometers). For the first time ever, the junior high boys team consisting of Christian Brettmann, Carter Mans, Bennett Nielsen, Caden Pecha, Tyson Ross, and Landon Tuttle were the ECNC conference champions. The girls team included Natalie Hoffman and Ella Stroy, who picked

up individual medals at meets including the Weeping Water Invitational. Over a variety of courses, runners developed their endurance and conquered hills. Four runners competed at the Junior High State Cross Country Meet: Christian Brettmann, Bennett Nielsen, Tyson Ross, and Natalie Hoffman.

HIGH SCHOOL GOLF **Curt Backemeyer**

The Knights Boys' Golf Team in the spring of 2022 included: senior Nate Lockman; juniors Jeston Junker and Nate Rust; sophomore Easton Miller; freshmen Drake Clements, Michael Hynes, and Rowan Kastens. The season was highlighted by a 3rd place finish at the ECNC meet and a Runner-Up finish at the Elmwood-Murdock Invitational, with Nate Lockman as the individual champion. Nate also qualified for the State meet with a 10th place finish at the district meet at Hidden Valley, Lincoln. Nate finished the two-day State meet in 23rd place at the Elks golf club in Columbus. We look forward to returning six members from last spring's squad in addition to our newcomers. Congratulations to all the boys on a successful season!

The fall of 2022 marked the 13th girls' golf season for Elmwood-Murdock. The Knights had seven team members including: senior Ella Zierott; juniors Madi Lambert and Jacie Fleischman; freshmen Isabelle Halferty, Rose Offner, and Payton Haase; freshmen Marissa Oehlerking and Hannah Petersen. The team of Madi, Jacie, Hannah, and Ella finished as ECNC conference runner-up. The team of Madi, Hannah, Jacie, and Ella set an 18-hole major meet school record at the Bennington Invitational with a team score of 452. Ella, Hannah, Rose, and Jacie set new 9-hole (189) and 18-hole (382) school record scores at the Elmwood-Murdock Invitational. Ella also set a new Grandpa's Woods individual 18-hole school record score of 93. Hannah, Madi, Jacie, and Rose concluded the season with a school record district team score of 473 at Hidden Valley, Lincoln. We were again pleased to have good numbers to field a full team and create competition for team spots to help everyone improve. We also give many thanks to Jeremy McHugh for volunteering his time to assist throughout the season. Congratulations to all of the girls!

HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL **Aaron Pryor**

The 2022-2023 Season has begun and the E-M Boys Basketball Teams will be competing at the Varsity, JV, and C Team Levels. We currently have 24 student-athletes in the program in Grades 9-12. They will be compet-

ing in Class C-2 again this season. We have a challenging regular season schedule and are aiming to be playing at a high level when Districts arrive in late February. We will rely heavily on the leadership from our 6 seniors: Henry Coleman, Reid Fletcher, Jeston Junker, Rylan Kastens, Braden Mommens and Nate Rust. We look forward to the opportunity to compete while representing Elmwood-Murdock High School in a positive manner at all times. We thank you for your support!

JUNIOR HIGH BOYS BASKETBALL **Monte Frerichs**

This season there were 23 boys on the team. We were able to play an A, and a B game against our opponents to allow for more opportunities to improve and grow. It was great to see the growth of the teams as we moved through the season. The overall goal is to develop the players and practice skills that will carry them into high school. I think teamwork is one of the most important attributes of any program and throughout the season this became a main focus. The players really worked together well. The season records are as follows: A team 7-4 B team 6-3 C team 2-3

HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS BASKETBALL **Paul Dwyer**

This year we have 16 girls in Grades 9-12 out for high school basketball. They are led by Senior Ella Zierott. The team is early into the season and are working each day to improve upon their skills for a very demanding schedule that is played each year. The Knights are playing D1 basketball classification, and this year have 20 games against teams that are either C2 or C1 in classification.

The 200 hour club has now entered it's fourth season. In order to be a member of this club, the girls had to have played in at least 200 hours of off-season basketball on their own. The girls were also awarded hours for being multi sport athletes. The following girls made the club and their pictures are hanging on the wall in the new gym Ella Zierott, Laney Frahm, Jacie Fleischman, Jordan Vogler, Tatum Backemeyer, Ava Hohman, Charley Hanes, Annie Backemeyer, Brooklyn Mans, Brooklyn Dowding, Zoe Zierott, Brooke Goudie, and Brooklyn Justus.