

From the Principal's Desk

Dear Arnold Public Schools Families, Stakeholders, and Community Members,

The 2026-27 school year is off to a great start, and I am excited about the many wonderful things happening across Arnold Public Schools! As we begin another school year, I want to take a moment to share how we are working to strengthen communication and continue telling the story of all the great things happening in our district.

One change this year will be how we share our Monthly Newsletters. Due to the very low enrollment in our Journalism class, we are going to make an effort to move our monthly newsletter to a digital format. This will allow us to continue sharing important information, celebrations, student accomplishments, and the many great things happening throughout our schools in a format that is accessible to more people.

We are also excited to be working with the Arnold Sentinel to share small weekly articles highlighting what some of our 7-12 grade classes are doing. This is another great opportunity to showcase the learning, experiences, projects, and accomplishments of our students and staff with the broader Arnold community. This year, I also plan to be intentional about sharing more stories and write-ups about the great work happening throughout Arnold Public Schools. We have so many things to be proud of, and I want to make sure our families, community members, and stakeholders have the opportunity to see and understand what makes Arnold Public Schools such a great place and such an important asset to our community.

Our district theme this year is "Our Future. Our Story." I believe this theme captures the importance of recognizing where we have been, celebrating where we are today, and intentionally planning for where

we want to go in the future. Each student, staff member, family, and community member plays an important role in that story.

As part of this work, I will also be providing monthly updates to our Board of Education highlighting the intentional work taking place across the district. These updates will focus on the efforts of our staff and students, our continued growth, and the work we are doing to ensure that Arnold Public Schools continues to maintain the excellent rating and strong reputation our district has historically earned. There are so many positive things happening at Arnold Public Schools, and I look forward to sharing more of those stories with you throughout the year. Thank you for your continued support of our students, staff, and schools. We are fortunate to have such a strong community behind us, and I am excited about what we can accomplish together.

Our Future. Our Story.

Sincerely,
Allison Goodenow
PreK-12 Principal
Arnold Public Schools



From the Superintendent's Desk

The school year is off and running and it has been a great start! Kids have been actively involved each and everyday.

As we get settled into the school year, you may have certain questions that come up. When that happens, please speak directly with the staff member involved. This will ensure that we avoid any miscommunications while also giving a prompt response to any questions or concerns you may have.

It has also been a great start to the year for our band. Marching band has made it's return by having the opportunity to march at the Nebraska State Fair and Arnold Fall Festival. The Pep Band will also be playing at home sporting events and Homecoming Pep Rally. Along with the band, it is exciting to see strong numbers with our South Loup Cheerleaders.

If you have a chance be sure and come on over and see our kids involved in multiple activities. The fall sports season is in full swing and One Act is gearing up for another year of competition. Please be sure and follow our Facebook page and check out our calendar on the school website for activities and changes along the way.

Joel Morgan, Superintendent, Arnold Public Schools

Building for the Future: Intentional Work Across Our District

Principal's Report to the Board 2026-2027 District Wide Theme: Our Future. Our Story.

As we begin the 2026–2027 school year, I want to take a moment to recognize the tremendous work our staff are doing across the district. While there are always challenges in education, I am very proud of the intentional, collaborative, and student-centered work happening in our classrooms. This year, we are continuing to build on strong foundations while also implementing new initiatives designed to better pre-

pare our students academically, personally, and for life beyond high school.

Strengthening Literacy Across the District

One of our biggest areas of focus continues to be literacy. We are not simply responding to state requirements — we are using this opportunity to strengthen our systems and provide students with more targeted support.

DIBELS Implementation

This year, we have imple-

mented DIBELS as our reading benchmark and progress-monitoring assessment for students in Kindergarten through 6th grade. DIBELS provides teachers with meaningful data that helps us identify students who may need additional support, monitor progress, and make instructional decisions based on individual student needs. DIBELS 8th Edition is also included on Nebraska's approved assessment list for the 2026–2027 school year. The important piece is not simply administering an assessment — it is what we do with the

Building Our Future

Principal's Report

(cont.)

information afterward. Our staff are using this data to identify needs and strengthen our Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions, with the goal of helping students close academic gaps and make meaningful progress.

We had our first Elementary MTSS meeting Thursday, September 10th to discuss the data from the start of the school year.

Heggerty

We are continuing to implement Heggerty in our lower elementary grades.

This work provides intentional instruction in phonemic and phonological awareness and helps build the foundational skills students need to become successful readers. It is another example of our staff being proactive about addressing reading skills early rather than waiting for students to fall further behind.

Nebraska's Statewide Literacy Work

Nebraska's statewide literacy efforts are being driven by the Nebraska Literacy Project and the Nebraska Reading Improvement Act. The Nebraska Literacy Project provides a statewide framework focused on evidence-based reading instruction, professional learning,

data-informed practices, and improving literacy outcomes for Nebraska students. Nebraska Revised Statute 79-2607 specifically requires the Nebraska Department of Education to establish a professional learning system related to evidence-based reading instruction.

What I am particularly proud of is that our district is already well ahead in preparing our staff for this work.

All of our staff members serving students in PreK–6th grade have either completed or are in the final year of their required LETRS professional learning. This means our teachers have invested significant time in understanding the science of reading and evidence-based literacy practices.

We are also expanding this literacy work beyond the traditional classroom teacher. Both of our Title Teachers and both of SPED teachers have completed this professional learning as well.

Literacy Training for Specialists Teachers

Our specials teachers are participating in a Specialists Literacy Workshop through ESU 10 that aligns with the literacy professional-learning expectations associated with Nebraska Revised Statute 79-2607.

This is important because literacy development does not happen only during the reading block. Nebraska's professional

learning guidance specifically recognizes educators in areas such as art, music, physical education, library, and technology as important partners in supporting literacy development.

Our scheduled trainings include:

- **Mrs. Berglund** – Art: October 7 at ESU 10 in Kearney
- **Mrs. Welch** – Music: November 5
- **Mr. Cole** – PE: November 10
- **Mrs. Moninger** – Media/Technology: November 10

This demonstrates our commitment to making literacy a district-wide responsibility, rather than something that belongs solely to our English/Language Arts teachers.

One other piece of our literacy work that I think is important to highlight is NebraskaREADS. NebraskaREADS is Nebraska's statewide early literacy initiative, supporting the Nebraska Reading Improvement Act and its focus on identifying students who may be experiencing reading difficulties and providing them with targeted, research-based intervention.

The Nebraska Reading Improvement Act specifically focuses on students in Kindergarten through 3rd grade. Students who are identified as having a reading deficiency based on the state's approved reading assessment are provided additional reading support and an Individualized Reading Improvement Plan to address their specific

Building Our Future

Principal's Report

(cont.)

needs.

Through our Title program screening, only 4 of our 49 students screened met the criteria for NebraskaREADS supplemental intervention services. That means the vast majority of the students we screened did not meet the threshold requiring that additional level of support. I think that is an encouraging indicator of the strong foundational literacy work already happening in our elementary classrooms, while also showing that we have systems in place to identify and support the students who do need additional intervention.

Expanding Practical Writing Skills

At the elementary level, we made the decision to move away from traditional “Tech Time” and instead use that time in a more purposeful way. Students are now receiving instruction and practice in:

- Cursive writing
- Appropriate letter writing
- The mechanics and structure of writing a letter
- Real-world communication
- Checks and balances associated with writing and sending correspondence

This is a great example of looking at instructional time and asking: “What skills will our

students actually use beyond the classroom?”

Rather than simply adding another technology block, we are intentionally providing students with practical communication and life skills.

Targeted Intervention: Meeting Students Where They Are

Another major strength of our district is our continued focus on Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions.

Our goal is not simply to identify that a student is struggling. We want to know and ask ourselves during our MTSS meetings:

- What specific skill is missing?
- What intervention does that student need?
- How frequently should we provide it?
- Is the intervention working?
- What does the data tell us about the student's progress?
- What do we need to change if the student is not responding?

This is a significant shift from simply identifying students who are behind to developing systems that actively help them close the gap.

Preparing Students for Life Beyond High School

We are also expanding the ways we prepare students for success after graduation.

8th Grade Financial Literacy

This year, our 8th graders

have transitioned from a traditional weights class to a Dave Ramsey financial literacy course. Students are learning practical financial concepts and skills that they will carry with them well beyond high school.

This is an important part of educating the whole student — not only preparing students academically, but preparing them to make responsible financial decisions as young adults.

Expanding College & Career Opportunities

Our students are taking advantage of opportunities that extend well beyond our traditional high school curriculum.

Senior Internships: 9 of our 15 seniors — 60% of the senior class — are currently participating in internship programs.

That is an incredible opportunity for students to gain real-world experience, explore potential careers, build professional skills, and begin making connections within our community.

Dual College Enrollment: Our juniors and seniors are also taking advantage of college-level coursework.

Juniors:

- 7 – Dual College History
- 5 – Intro to Psychology
- 2 – Principles of Marketing
- 1 – Personal Finance
- 1 – Interpersonal Skills for Engineering
- 1 – Intro to Sociology

Building Our Future

Principal's Report

(cont.)

Seniors:

- 13 – English Composition I
- 9 – College Algebra
- 1 – Intro to Theater

That represents 40 current enrollments in college-level courses among our juniors and seniors, giving our students opportunities to earn college credit, experience the expectations of postsecondary coursework, and challenge themselves academically while still in high school.

Collaboration Across the District

One of the things I am especially proud of is the collaboration taking place among our staff.

We are continuing to develop and strengthen Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and are intentionally incorporating cross-grade collaboration. This is just one small way of how we will be using our 1:30pm outs for professional development once a month. Teachers are talking across grade levels about:

- What students are learning
- Where students are struggling
- What skills students need before moving to the next grade
- How instructional practices

can be aligned

- How assessment data can inform instruction
- How we can create greater consistency for students throughout their educational journey

This type of collaboration helps us move from individual classrooms working in isolation toward a connected K–12 system.

Elementary SPED

I also want to recognize the work Mrs. Morgan is doing with our elementary special education students. She is working extremely hard to help our students close academic gaps and make meaningful progress, while also doing a great job collaborating with our classroom teachers to make sure students' individual needs are being met.

I really appreciate the communication and teamwork that is happening between Mrs. Morgan and our elementary teachers. She's not working in isolation — she's working with teachers to look at student needs, determine where those gaps are, and figure out what supports and interventions will help each student be successful. That type of collaboration is so important when we're trying to provide individualized support and help students make progress.

And on top of all of that, Mrs. Morgan is also balancing teaching two high school

Spanish classes. She's taking on responsibilities across both our elementary and high school programs and doing an excellent job managing both roles.

I really want to recognize the amount of work and commitment that takes. Mrs. Morgan is making a difference with our elementary SPED students while also providing our high school students with the opportunity to learn Spanish, and I appreciate the flexibility, dedication, and care she brings to both areas.

7-12 SPED

Transitional Program

I also want to highlight the work happening through our 7–12 Transition Program and, specifically, the tremendous work Mrs. Blowers is doing with our 7-12 special education students.

The purpose of the transition program is to help our students begin preparing for what comes after high school. Transition planning looks beyond simply getting students to graduation and focuses on helping them develop the skills, experiences, and connections they will need for their next step — whether that is college or other postsecondary education, employment, vocational training, independent living, or becoming more involved in their community. Nebraska's transition requirements emphasize individualized planning based

Building Our Future

Principal's Report

(cont.)

on each student's strengths, interests, preferences, and needs.

Mrs. Blowers is working extremely hard with our SPED students to make sure this process is meaningful and individualized. She is helping students work through what they want their future to look like, identifying areas where they need additional support, building practical skills, and helping connect them with the resources and experiences they will need once they transition out of high school.

I think this is an incredibly important piece of what we do because success doesn't end when a student walks across the graduation stage. We want our students to leave us as prepared as possible for whatever comes next.

A lot of work goes into making that transition successful, and I really want to recognize Mrs. Blowers for the time, effort, and care she is putting into making sure our students have a plan and are set up for success beyond high school.

There are also a lot of really valuable resources and experiences that come through our transition program. Students have opportunities to participate in mock interviews, career exploration, college visits, and interviews with local businesses in careers that they are interested

in pursuing. Mrs. Blowers also helps facilitate meetings and connections with different agencies and organizations that can provide resources and support for our students as they move toward adulthood.

Preschool Program

I also want to take a moment to highlight our preschool program, because things are going really well so far this year. We currently have 9 students in our morning class and 12 students in our afternoon class, for a total of 21 preschoolers. Everything has been going very smoothly, and the kids are really enjoying their classroom and all of the different activities and experiences they are getting.

Mrs. Payne is doing a great job providing opportunities for our youngest students to learn through play, build social skills, develop classroom routines, and begin building those important early academic and literacy skills.

She has also added some really neat outdoor opportunities this year. We now have a mud kitchen outside, and they are in the process of building a really neat outdoor play house. I think those additions will provide the students with some great opportunities for imaginative play, creativity, problem-solving, and hands-on learning.

The preschool is also planning a field trip to Dusty Trails in October. The exact date

is still being finalized, but we're excited to give our preschool students that opportunity to get out and have a new experience together.

I also want to encourage all of our board members to take a look at the Arnold Public Preschool Facebook page. It really does a great job showcasing all of the different things the preschool is offering and implementing. I think it's a great way for you to see some of the activities, learning experiences, and fun things happening in the preschool classroom throughout the year.

Overall, I'm really pleased with how the preschool year has started, and I think Mrs. Payne is doing a wonderful job creating a fun, welcoming, and engaging environment for our youngest students.

The Bigger Picture

When I look across the district, I see a staff that is willing to learn, adapt, collaborate, and invest in our students.

We are:

- Strengthening literacy.
- Expanding intervention.
- Building practical life skills.
- Increasing college-level opportunities.
- Connecting students with real-world experiences.
- Investing in professional development.
- Collaborating across grade levels.
- Preparing students for life after graduation.

Building Our Future Principal's Report (cont.)

Most importantly, these initiatives are not isolated projects. They are part of a larger

effort to build a district where we are intentional about what we teach, intentional about how we support students, and intentional about preparing them for their futures.

There is a great deal to be

proud of in the work happening throughout our district this year.

Our staff are not standing still. They are learning, adapting, and continuing to move our district forward.

A Peek Inside the Classroom: Weighing the Road to Revolution

By Jason Wehnes
7-12 Social Studies Teacher
Arnold Public Schools

As the nation marks 250 years since the Declaration of Independence, students in Mr. Wehnes's 8th Grade Social Studies class are looking back to the country's beginning to ask two big questions: Why did the colonists decide to break away from Great Britain, and were they justified in their cause?

The goal is not just to list events, but to weigh them. Students are analyzing and evaluating which factors did the most to push the colonies toward war. The unit builds on earlier lessons about the Indigenous peoples of North America before European arrival, the motivations of the European powers that colonized it, and daily life in colonial America, all leading up to the birth of the nation.

Students are examining the chain of events that strained the relationship between Britain and its colonies. After the French and In-

dian War left Britain deep in debt, Parliament looked to the colonies to help pay for it. The Proclamation of 1763 barred settlers from moving west of the Appalachian Mountains. The Stamp Act and the Townshend Acts placed taxes on everyday goods, sparking the rallying cry of "no taxation without representation." Tensions turned deadly at the Boston Massacre in 1770, and the Boston Tea Party in 1773 led Britain to respond with the Intolerable Acts, which closed Boston Harbor and tightened control over Massachusetts. By April 1775, the first shots of the war were fired at Lexington and Concord.

Rather than treating these events as a simple timeline, students must decide which ones mattered most. Was it the taxes themselves, or the colonists' lack of a voice in Parliament? Was it the violence in Boston, or Britain's harsh punishment

afterward? Students are expected to back up their answers with evidence and to consider how the events looked from both the colonial and British points of view.

The question of whether the colonists were justified will push students even further. In the coming weeks, they will consider the ideas written into the Declaration of Independence, that people have rights that the government cannot take away and that people may change a government that abuses them, and ask whether Britain's actions truly crossed that line.

For students, the lesson is that history is not a list of dates. It is a series of choices made by ordinary people, and 250 years later, those choices still shape the coun-



APS 2026-2027 Calendar

October 2026

16th End of Quarter 1;
2:40pm Dismissal
20th Picture Retake Day
21st 1:30pm Dismissal
- Teacher Inservice-
NO PM PRESCHOOL
30th NO SCHOOL- FALL BREAK

November 2026

12th NO SCHOOL- Teacher Work Day
18th 1:30pm Dismissal
- Teacher Inservice-
NO PM PRESCHOOL
24th 2:40 Dismissal-
Thanksgiving Break Begins
25th-27th NO SCHOOL- Thanksgiving Break

December 2026

16th 1:30pm Dismissal-
Teacher Inservice-
NO PM PRESCHOOL
22nd 2:40 Dismissal- End of 2nd Quarter-
Christmas Break Begins
23rd-31st NO SCHOOL-Christmas Break!

January 2027

1st NO SCHOOL- Christmas Break!
4th NO SCHOOL-Teacher Inservice
5th School Resumes for Prek-12
20th 1:30pm Dismissal-
Teacher Inservice-
NO PM PRESCHOOL

February 2027

11th 1:30pm Dismissal-
Parent Teacher Conferences
2:00pm-8:00pm
12th NO SCHOOL
15th NO SCHOOL- Teacher Inservice

March 2027

10th 1:30pm Dismissal-
Teacher Inservice- End of Quarter 3
11th-12th NO SCHOOL- Spring Break
25th 2:40pm Dismissal- Easter Break
26th NO SCHOOL- Good Friday
29th NO SCHOOL- Easter Monday

April 2027

9th NO SCHOOL-
Teacher Work Day- SLB Track Meet
21st 1:30pm Dismissal-
Teacher Inservice-
NO PM PRESCHOOL
30th NO SCHOOL-
Teacher Work Day-
MNAC Track & Golf

May 2027

8th Graduation
14th Elementary Track & Field Day
14th LAST DAY OF SCHOOL-
1:30pm Dismissal- End of Quarter 4
17th Teacher Inservice/Contracted Day

PowerSchool App Available

In the App Store if you search for the Powerschool app, you will find a quick and easy way to access your student's grades with your mobile phone.

- Simply download the free app. It will ask you for your District Code (a 4 digit code) immediately.

- The code for Arnold Public School is:

• **SNPX**

- Then you can use your regular username and password from last year. If you are unable to remember your password, then please contact Heather at the school office by phone 308-848-2226.



early out SCHEDULE

1st 8:00-8:37

2nd 8:39-9:16

3rd 9:18-9:54

Grab 9:54-9:59

4th 10:01-10:37

5th 10:39-11:16

6th 11:18-11:55

Lunch 11:55-12:25

7th 12:25-1:00

8th 1:00-1:30

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Cafeteria Pricing

Breakfast

K-12 \$2.00

Adults \$2.90

Lunch

K-6 \$3.05

7-12 \$3.30

Adults \$5.10

Activity

Pass Pricing

Family Passes \$80

Adult Pass \$40

Student Pass \$20





Students Mark 25th Anniversary of September 11 Through Literature, Theater, and Service

By Nicole Badgley and Debby Moninger, English Teachers

The English and Social Studies departments are building this entire quarter around a single date: September 11, 2001. As the nation marks the 25th anniversary of the attacks, students at every grade level are reading, writing, and traveling to honor the day's history and its lasting impact.

The unit will culminate in a trip to Kearney, where students will see the Crane River Theater's production of "Come From Away." The play follows a group of Americans whose flight back to the United States was diverted to another country on September 11.

Each grade band is approaching the anniversary through its own lens.

Seventh and eighth graders are reading "Towers Falling" by Jewell Parker Rhodes, which

follows a family left homeless in the aftermath of the attacks. Students are examining the tragedy's toll on mental health and its long reach into the years that followed.

Ninth and tenth graders are reading "Ground Zero" by Alan Gratz. The novel places students inside the towers on the day of the attacks while also following a family in Afghanistan confronting similar destruction. Students will carry that dual perspective into a project centered on empathy and what they've learned about Afghanistan and its people.

Eleventh and twelfth graders are reading "The Red Bandanna" by Tom Rinaldi, which traces one man's quiet heroism and his family's slow discovery of how many lives he saved. As students follow his story from mystery to recognition, they're preparing for a project of their own: interviewing local heroes and writing about their



service to the community.

Twenty-five years after September 11, the school is asking students not just to study history, but to carry its lessons forward — into empathy, into service, and into their own community.



By Melissa Sandager, APS Science

There has been lots of hands-on science happening at APS these past couple of weeks! Earth Science students used chalk to create posters showing the different types of galaxies, while Biology students completed the "Murder and a Meal" lab - They tested the stomach contents of a fictional victim for different macromolecules to figure out what the victim had last eaten and help solve the crime.

Seventh graders officially earned their lab privileges by showing off their measuring and procedure-following skills with a colorful rainbow lab and, of course, a very messy slime lab!

Eighth graders have been learning about DNA and genetics, organizing chromosomes in a karyotype lab to look for genetic disorders and even extracting DNA from strawberries so they could see real DNA for themselves.

Applied Science students have also been busy getting the greenhouse planted and ready for another growing year. These are just a few of the fun things happening in science at APS

Superintendent

Joel Morgan

PK-12 Principal

Allison Goodenow

Editor-in-Chief

Nicole Badgley

The opinions and ideas expressed in the articles are solely those of the reporters. The articles don't necessarily reflect the opinions and ideas of Arnold Public Schools. Each article is edited by both students and their teachers prior to publication. Mistakes may appear, as students are learning. With this being a student created newsletter, mistakes become teachable moments.

No advertising, other than school sponsored activities, may appear. Opinion pieces, future news items, comments, and suggestions may be submitted to nicole.badgley@arnoldpublicschools.org.

The newsletter is sent to all families and boxholders of District 89. If you, or someone you know, would like to receive the newsletter, please contact the school office at 308-848-2226 to add your name to the mailing list. You may also download the newsletter from the school website: <http://arnoldpublicschools.org>

Together We Transform Lives

TEAMMATES

MENTORING
ARNOLD

BECOME A MENTOR TODAY!

A mentor is:

- A safe, adult friend
- A cheerleader
- Empathetic
- Strengths spotter
- Caring
- A promise keeper
- Willing to meet once a week
- Non-judgmental
- Committed to youth

Questions? Contact our
Program Coordinator:

Jason Wehnes
(402) 469-7871

ACT Test Dates 2026-2027



Test Dates

September 19, 2026

October 17, 2026

December 12, 2026

February 27, 2027

April 10, 2027

June 12, 2027

July 10, 2027

Registration Dates

August 14, 2026

September 11, 2026

November 6, 2026

January 22, 2027

March 5, 2027

May 7, 2027

June 4, 2027

Late Registration Dates

September 1, 2026

September 29, 2026

November 29, 2026

February 9, 2027

March 23, 2027

May 25, 2027

June 22, 2027

October

A NOTE FROM YOUR SCHOOL COUSELOR



Resilience

Resilience is the ability to bounce back after challenges, mistakes, or tough times. It means, students learn how to keep going, even when things feel hard.

In school, resilience can look like:

- Trying again after getting a low test score
- Asking for help when something is confusing



Student Stop

It's important to understand... mistakes help you learn. Persistence through challenging tasks is key. Ask for help when needed.



My door is ALWAYS Open

Stop by, say hello, or set up a time to talk.

ashley.nansel@arnoldpublicschools.org

308-848-2226

Tips from the School Counselor

Parents: You are your child's best support. A few ways you can support your child this school year:

- Praise hard work, persistence, and improvement rather than only grades or outcomes. This builds confidence and a growth mindset.

Students: Stay Organized

- Write down assignments and important dates
- Keep school materials in one place
- Break large tasks into smaller steps
- Ask for help when you need it

Important Dates: ACT

Test Date

September 19

October 17

December 12

Registration Deadline

August 14

September 11

November 6



November

A NOTE FROM YOUR SCHOOL COUSELOR



Gratitude

Gratitude is the practice of noticing and appreciating the positive things in our lives—both big and small. It means taking time to recognize people and moments

In school, gratitude can look like:

- Saying “thank you” to a teacher, friend, or staff member
- Appreciating help from others



Student Stop

Practice gratitude... Pay attention to the good things in your day. Saying, ‘thank you/ and noticing positives can improve your mood and attitude

My door is ALWAYS Open

Stop by, say hello, or set up a time to talk.

ashley.nansel@arnoldpublicschools.org

308-848-2226

Tips from the School Counselor

Parents: You are your child’s best support. A few ways you can support your child this school year:

- Encourage your children to notice what they appreciate at school, at home, and in their community

Students: Ways to show gratitude

- Help others without being asked
- Notice the small things that make your day better
- Practice looking for the positive, even on challenging days



Important Dates: ACT

Test Date

September 19

October 17

December 12

Registration Deadline

August 14

September 11

November 6



Helping Children Learn®

Tips Families Can Use to Help Children Do Better in School

Title I-Educational Service Unit 10

Use frequent and fun activities to help your child master math

Math is a subject that builds on what students already know. To solve today's problems, your child must be able to remember and apply previously-learned concepts.

Research shows that one effective technique for long-term learning is *distributed practice*. This means that instead of practicing math for one hour once a week, your child should practice the same material in shorter chunks of time every day.

There are many fun ways to help your elementary schooler practice math. Here are three to try together:

- 1. Pretend your calculator is broken.** Say, "Imagine our calculator has no number 8. What are some other ways to represent that number?" It could be $10-2$ or $4+4$ or $24/3$.
- 2. Play games with dice or cards.** Take turns rolling two dice or flipping over two cards and quickly adding up the sum of the two numbers. Later, include subtraction, multiplication and division in the challenge.
- 3. Combine coins.** Put an array of coins on a table. Keep a few in your hand that your child can't see. Then, say something like, "I have three coins in my hand. Together, they are worth 60 cents. What are they?" Your child can use the table coins to solve the problem. Then, trade places.

Source: G.M. Donoghue and J. Hattie, "A Meta-Analysis of Ten Learning Techniques," *Frontiers in Education*.



Dive deeper into reading

Strong readers can understand the meaning, context and details in a text. To develop reading comprehension skills, encourage your child to:

- **Summarize the** chain of events in a story out loud. Why did things turn out that way?
- **Discuss ways** the text relates to things your child has learned or experienced.
- **Take a character's** place. Would your child make the same choices?
- **Consider what point** the author was trying to get across.



Source: "Reading Comprehension and Higher Order Thinking Skills," K-12 Reader

Learning thrives on respect

Respectful behavior helps create the positive school environment students need to learn. To teach your child what it involves:

- **Discuss respect.** How does it feel to be treated with respect or disrespect?
- **Demonstrate.** Treat your child and others with respect.
- **Notice and praise** respectful behavior.

Reinforce responsibilities

Learning in school is your child's job, and it comes with responsibilities. Remind your child that fulfilling them means:

- **Being prepared** for class with pencils, paper and a positive attitude.
- **Participating** in class discussions.
- **Organizing**, so your child can find schoolwork and supplies when needed.
- **Persisting** when work is challenging.



Questions are welcome at conferences

A parent-teacher conference provides valuable one-on-one time with the teacher to learn about your child's academic progress, behavior and well-being. You can also find out more about what to expect in the year ahead.

Preparing specific questions in advance will help you make the most of your time with the teacher. Ask questions like:

- **Are my child's reading** and math skills at the level you would expect for this time in this grade?
- **Is my child in different** groups for different subjects?
- **What topics will you cover** in class this year?
- **What are your expectations** for work and reading at home?
- **What are my child's** strengths and areas for improvement?
- **How well does my child** get along with other students?
- **Does my child qualify** for any special programs?
- **How can I support** my child's learning at home?



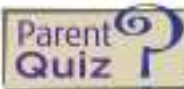
Gaming is taking over my child's life. What can I do?

Q: My child loves to play games online, and often rushes through schoolwork in order to play them. I'm worried about the effects on my child's schoolwork and mental well-being. What should I do?

A: Some games—such as those on educational topics or that promote exercise—can be beneficial. However you are right that too much time on the wrong activities can negatively affect health and learning. Game designers know how to create games that keep players hooked. And some games include “gambling” and reward elements that increase the risk that players will become online gamblers.

To keep gaming from interfering with schoolwork, healthy activities and time with friends and family:

- **Set boundaries.** Review game content. Allow only educational games, and only in your presence. Then, establish screen-free times of day, such as schoolwork time, reading time, mealtime, family time and bedtime.
- **Emphasize** that learning matters more than leveling up in a game.
- **Offer enjoyable screen-free alternatives.** Plan fun activities such as reading aloud, playing outdoors and playing board games.



Are you teaching problem-solving skills?

All children face obstacles. To overcome them, they must identify and act on solutions. Are you helping your child learn to think through problems and decide what to do? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below:

1. **Do you provide** your child with lots of opportunities to practice making decisions?
2. **Do you ask** your child to think through problems with you? Do you ask questions rather than jumping in with solutions?
3. **Do you talk** about your child's strengths and suggest applying them to challenges?
4. **Do you tell** your child about strategies you use to find solutions when you have problems?
5. **Do you remind** your child about times your child managed problems well in the past?

How well are you doing?

More yes answers mean you are helping your child tackle problems head-on. For each no, try that idea.

“A problem is a chance for you to do your best.”
—Duke Ellington

Teach the value of honesty

Honesty is a fundamental value in school as well as life. However, around third grade, when grades and tests take on more importance, cheating sometimes follows. Stress the importance of honesty with your child. Make it clear that:

- **Working hard** at learning and being honest are more important than getting a high grade.
- **Cheating is never OK**, even to help a friend. Together, role-play ways to say no.
- **A grade or test score** will never change your love for your child.

Encourage recall practice

Research shows that recalling information is a learning activity that helps students retain material better. To help your child put this study strategy to use:



- **Suggest inviting** a friend over to study. The children can quiz one another. Or, you can call out questions.
- **Create practice tests.** Help your child look over notes, reading and handouts and create questions the teacher might ask. Then your child can answer them.

Source: P.K. Agarwal and others, “Retrieval Practice Consistently Benefits Student Learning,” *Educational Psychology Review*

Chores teach skills & more

Assigning chores may sound old-fashioned. But children who do a few age-appropriate chores at home learn lessons they can apply in school. Chores can help children:

- **Invest** in making their surroundings or family life better.
- **Learn** life skills.
- **Develop** self-discipline.
- **Learn** to take pride in their work.
- **Practice** working with others.

Helping Children Learn®

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Helping Students Learn®

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School

Title I-Educational Service Unit 10

Ask questions to help your child find solutions for math problems

Helping your middle schooler with math may seem difficult if the concepts are unfamiliar to you. Don't worry! You don't need to have the answers to demonstrate how to tackle math assignments. The key is to ask questions that will help your child figure things out.



When your child is stuck, ask:

- **Which problem** are you working on? Help your child focus on one thing at a time. This can ease any feelings of intimidation your student may be feeling when faced with a whole sheet of equations.
- **Can you read me the instructions?** Reading directions out loud can help your child pick up on key words that were overlooked the first time.
- **Is there any part of the problem you can do?** Once your child gets started, things may become clearer.
- **Are there things you have learned before** that might help you?
- **Where could you look for more explanation?** Suggest that your child check the textbook, the class website or search online for instructional math videos on the concept.

If your child is still confused after giving a real effort, ask, "How soon can you ask the teacher for help?" Suggest writing down specific questions to ask.



Make your home a place for learning

Building skills and increasing knowledge aren't just school activities. When you promote and reinforce learning at home, your child becomes a stronger student. Here are some simple ways to enrich your child's non-school hours:

- **Engage in conversations** about all kinds of subjects. Ask what your child thinks. Listen and ask follow-up questions.
- **Teach life skills.** Assign your child meaningful responsibilities. Demonstrate how to prepare simple meals and follow a budget.
- **Ask about newly-learned** topics and ideas. What does your child find most interesting?
- Have your child explain concepts to you. Retelling information reinforces it in students' minds.
- **Introduce your child** to new things and experiences. Ask, "Can you think of a way this relates to what you are learning in school?"
- **Ask for help.** Have your middle schooler apply knowledge and skills to answer questions or help you with projects.

Turn reading into learning

When your child needs to learn and recall academic material in a reading assignment, a four-step approach can help. Encourage your middle schooler to:



1. **Skim the text** and pay attention to graphics, headings and boldface text to get an idea of key points.
2. **Read the text slowly** and take notes.
3. **Write a summary** of the main themes and supporting facts.
4. **Answer questions** about the material. If there aren't any at the end of the text, you child can make some up and then answer them.

Demonstrate organization

To help your child manage multiple classes and activities effectively, show how to use:

- **A planner** to record and see assignments and schedules in one place.
- **To-do lists** to stay on top of daily, weekly or monthly tasks.
- **Sticky notes** to jot down reminders or thoughts to come back to later.

Provide thinking practice

Middle schoolers are expected to research topics, think deeply about information and back up ideas with solid evidence. To help your child rise to the challenge, ask questions that require higher order thinking, such as:

- **Why** is your favorite so good? What characteristics make it better than other things?
- **How** could we do this better (or save money on this)?
- **Which** should we get? Which product or service is the best choice and why?



Helping Students Learn®

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School



MIDDLE SCHOOL

October 2026



My child won't say what's wrong. What should I do?

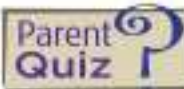
Q: My middle schooler is clearly upset about something, but doesn't want to talk about it. How can I get my child to open up without being too pushy?

A: It's common for adolescents to clam up when it comes to discussing problems with their families. But issues that drag on for days or weeks can affect health and schoolwork, so it is important to keep trying to find out what is bothering your child.



To open the door to two-way communication:

- **Express concern.** Say something like, "I can see there's something on weighing on your mind. I'm here for you no matter what. You can talk to me about anything. It's my job to help you figure things out."
- **Define expectations.** "I respect your privacy and your desire to handle this yourself. Take a little more time to think things over, but I do need to know what's happening. Let's talk after dinner and see if we can figure it out together."
- **Reach out for support, if necessary.** If your child still refuses to talk, contact a school counselor, doctor, coach or other trusted figure in your child's life. Work together to discover what's going on and help your middle schooler manage it.



Are you helping your child stay focused?

It takes concentration to pay attention in busy classrooms, read complex material and solve multi-step problems. Are you helping your middle schooler strengthen focus? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below:

1. **Do you establish** screen-free times and zones and have your child turn off unneeded devices and apps when doing schoolwork?
2. **Do you suggest** that your child set goals for each study session?
3. **Do you minimize** distractions when your child is working?
4. **Do you encourage** your child to engage in screen-free focus-building activities, such as making models or playing sports?
5. **Do you notice** and offer praise when your child persists and sees tasks through?

How well are you doing?

More yes answers mean you are helping your child develop powers of concentration. For each no answer, try that idea.

"People think focus means saying yes to the thing you've got to focus on. But that's not what it means at all. It means saying no to the hundred other good ideas that there are."
—Steve Jobs

Supervise social media use

Research shows that the majority of 11 and 12-year olds use social media despite being underage. To learn to navigate this world safely, they need adult guidance. To help:

- **Set behavior standards.** No hurtful posts. No posting anything your child wouldn't want the whole world to see.
- **Protect privacy.** Review settings and limit who can see your child's posts.
- **Demonstrate balance.** Put phones away during time with your child.
- **Ask your child** to tell you about posts that are confusing or scary.

Source: J.M. Nagata and others, "Prevalence and Patterns of Social Media Use in Early Adolescents," *Academic Pediatrics*.

Help your middle schooler practice being responsible

Having some responsibilities at home helps your child learn to handle them at school. Avoid overload

by assigning just a few new self-care responsibilities



that fit age and maturity, like making school lunches or doing laundry. Then, allow your child to learn by experiencing consequences when responsibilities aren't met.

Foster traits for learning

Each student is an individual. But students who achieve in school share many qualities. To help your middle schooler develop:

- **Curiosity,** expose your child to new ideas and experiences.
- **Persistence,** help your child set goals and praise effort and progress.
- **Resilience,** encourage learning from mistakes and planning for improvement.
- **Confidence,** show your love and belief in your child's ability to learn.

Helping Students Learn®

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Helping Students Learn®

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School

Title I-Educational Service Unit 10

Teach your teen strategies for evaluating online information

The world of digital media is changing fast, and the vast amount of information available online is not regulated for quality or accuracy. Some of it is misleading or just plain wrong. As a result, the ability to assess the accuracy, reliability and bias of online sources is a vital skill for high school students.

Whether your teen is looking online for information for a school assignment or for personal interest, recommend using these strategies:

- **Choose among search results carefully.** That AI summary above the list of results may be drawing on unreliable sources. The sites at the top of the list aren't necessarily the best—they may have paid to be there.
- **Consider the source.** When reading anything online, your teen should ask: *Is the purpose of this site or channel to sell a product or agenda? Where do the facts come from?*
- **Compare sources.** Your teen should check out multiple sites on the same subject. Comparing two or three side by side can help your teen see the limits and merits of each.
- **Be skeptical of health information.** Many sources are in business to sell products. Your teen should discuss health information with a doctor before acting on it.

Source: J. Breakstone and others, *Students' Civic Online Reasoning: A National Portrait*, The Stanford History Education Group, Stanford University.



Apply new thinking skills to learning

Brain development in the high school years gives students' more ability to think analytically, plan ahead, solve problems and control impulses. But they need practice in applying these new skills to learning and schoolwork.

Encourage your teen to adopt study habits that help, such as:

- **Color-coding** different types of information and materials. Your teen's brain will categorize the information it sees in different colors as it processes what steps to take next.
- **Outlining steps** of long-term projects. Your teen will be able to
- see progress, what remains to be done and due dates in one place.
- **Following routines.** Consistent patterns help teens manage time and stay on track.
- **Creating diagrams** to visualize information. These make it easier to understand and recall material.

Source: P. Lorain, "Brain Development in Young Adolescents," National Education Association.

School counselors can help

You have an ally in supporting your teen in school. Your teen's counselor is trained to assist families with many issues. Reach out with questions or concerns about:

- **Classes** or scheduling.
- **Grades**, academic or learning issues and how to help your teen.
- **Social or emotional issues** affecting your teen.
- **Planning for life** after high school.
- **Finding resources** and support in a family crisis.



Improve learning behavior

In a recent survey of teachers, the majority said that disruptive student behavior in school has gotten worse. Teachers also say that effective help from families would have a positive impact. To provide it:

- **Discuss** appropriate school behavior with your teen. Make it clear you expect it.
- **Involve your teen** in setting rules and consequences. Enforce them consistently.
- **Keep an open mind** if the school contacts you with a concern about your teen's behavior. Listen to all sides before making decisions or taking action.

Source: H. Kautz and M. Riser-Kositsky, "Teacher Morale in 2026, Five Takeaways," Education Week.

Foster more responsibility

Self-disciplined, responsible students do better in school—and adulthood. To foster these traits, ask your teen to:

- **Schedule** and track personal appointments.
- **Set** and stick to a budget.
- **Plan** a family activity.
- **Read** news articles. The responsibilities of world leaders offer teens perspective.



Helping Students Learn®

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School



HIGH SCHOOL

October 2026

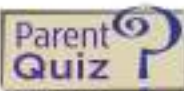


Math isn't my strength. How can I help my teen with it?

Q: My teen is having a tough time with math this year. I was never very good in math, and I don't know how to help. What can I do?

A: This is a common situation. But no matter what your own math skills are, there are several ways you can support your high school student:

- **Model the right attitude.** Research shows that families' attitudes toward math have a direct effect on their children's achievement in it. Instead of saying "I never liked math, either," make it clear to your teen that you think math is worth learning and your teen is capable of learning it.
- **Point out all the ways** you use math during the day—on the job, in the kitchen, while paying bills, etc. Help your teen see that math is something adults need to know.
- **Get your teen talking.** Ask your teen to explain a problem to you, step by step.
- **Suggest tackling any part of a problem** that your teen can do, and showing all work. Then your teen can ask the teacher for clarification, and the teacher will be able to see where things went off track.
- **Encourage persistence.** The feeling of finally "getting it" motivates students to take on new challenges.



Are you helping your teen handle issues?

Few students sail through school without ever hitting a snag—a challenging class, a complex concept, a demanding teacher. Do you know how to help if your teen is facing an academic struggle? Answer yes or no below:

1. **Do you help** your teen get to the root of the issue? Ask, "Why do you think you are struggling?"
2. **Do you recommend** that your teen spend time every day studying for the class?
3. **Do you encourage** your teen to ask the teacher for help making a plan for improvement?
4. **Do you explore** other resources for help with your teen, such as online videos or tutoring?
5. **Do you contact** the teacher or school counselor yourself if your teen continues to struggle?

How well are you doing?

More yes answers mean you are boosting your teen's ability to solve academic problems. For each no, try that idea.

"Where there is a problem there is an opportunity to learn something new."
—Nitin Nandani

Get specific about reading

Teens are more likely to do things when they are given specific instructions rather than general suggestions. So to encourage reading, try suggesting a specific book. To find titles to recommend:

1. **Ask what types of writing** your teen enjoys—fantasy, nonfiction, biography, etc.
2. **Find lists** and reviews of books for teens on sites like [Goodreads.com](https://www.goodreads.com) and [Commonsensemedia.org](https://www.commonsensemedia.org).
3. **Make a list** of a few titles your teen might like. Suggest one to check out on your teen's next trip to the library.

Source: T. Cremin and L. Scholes, "Reading for pleasure: scrutinising the evidence base" *Language and Education*.

Teach wise decision-making

Teens' decisions can affect their futures. Go through this process with your teen:

1. **Describe** the situation in detail.
2. **Brainstorm** as many options as you can. Discuss the pros and cons of each.
3. **Let** your teen decide.
4. **Evaluate.** Would your teen make the same choice again?



Establish social precautions

Social media can help teens feel connected, but it can also provoke feelings of anxiety and depression. To limit negative effects:

- **Charge phones away** from your teen's bedroom at night.
- **Encourage mood checks.** If social media is getting your teen down, it's time to turn to a friend or trusted adult.
- **Set a cooling-off period.** Say, "If a post makes you mad, wait 24 hours before responding."

Source: T. Masti-zada and others, "The Impact of Social Media & Technology on Child and Adolescent Mental Health," *Journal of Psychiatry and Psychiatric Disorders*.

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October 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				B: Pancakes L: Spaghetti	B: Waffles L: Pulled Pork Nachos	
4	B: Breakfast Burrito L: Cheddar Broccoli Soup	B: French Toast Sticks L: Chicken Quesadilla	B: Pancakes & Sausage L: Cheeseburger Macaroni	B: Breakfast Pizza L: Tator Tot Casserole	B: Bacon & Hashbrowns L: Corndog	10
11	B: Sausage & Eggs L: Chicken Bowls	B: Waffles L: Taco Tuesday	B: Biscuits & Gravy L: Sandwiches	B: Tornado L: Chicken Noodle Soup	B: Cereal L: Chicken Nuggets & French Fries	17
18	B: French Toast Sticks L: Burrito	B: Pancake on a Stick L: Fajitas	1:30 Dismissal B: Oatmeal L: Pizza	22 B: Combo Bar L: Chili	23 B: Bacon & Eggs L: Lasagna	24
25	B: Breakfast Burrito L: Grilled Cheese & Tomato Soup	B: Pancakes & Bacon L: Taco Tuesday	B: Breakfast Pizza L: Chicken Strips	29 B: Sausage & Hash Browns L: Wraps	30 NO SCHOOL!!	31 

Breakfast Pricing
K-12 \$2.00.
Adults \$2.90

Breakfast includes:
Milk, Juice, Yogurt,
and fruit

Lunch Pricing K-
6 \$3.05
7-12 \$3.30
Adults \$5.10

Lunch includes: Milk,
Salad Bar, and fruit

Menu Subject to
Change

November 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 B: Pancakes L: Spaghetti	3 B: Waffles L: Chicken Quesadillas	4 B: Breakfast Burrito L: Pulled Pork Nachos	5 B: French Toast Sticks L: Cheddar & Broccoli Soup	6 B: Pancakes & Sausage L: Cheeseburger Macaroni	7
8	9 B: Breakfast Pizza L: Tator Tot Casserole	10 B: Bacon & Hashbrowns L: Taco Tuesday	11 B: Sausage & Eggs L: Corn Dogs	12 NO SCHOOL!	13 B: Waffles L: Chicken Bowls	14
15	16 B: Biscuits & Gravy L: Sandwiches	17 B: Tornadoes L: Fajitas	18 1:30 Dismissal B: Cereal L: Pizza	19 B: French Toast Sticks L: Thanksgiving Dinner	20 B: Pancake on a Stick L: Chicken Noodle Soup	21
22	23 B: Oatmeal L: Chili	24 2:40 Dismissal B: Combo Bars L: Taco Tuesday	25 NO SCHOOL!	26 	27 NO SCHOOL!	28
29	30 B: Breakfast Pizza L: Grilled Cheese & Tomato Soup					



Breakfast Pricing
K-12 \$2.00 Adults
\$2.90

Breakfast includes:
Milk, Juice, Yogurt,
and fruit

Lunch Pricing K-
6 \$3.05
7-12 \$3.30
Adults \$5.10

Lunch includes:
Milk, Salad Bar, and
fruit

Menu Subject to
Change

October 2026

[illegible]

November 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 8:00AM MNAC Vocal Clinic @ Arthur County High School	3	4 8:00AM Lions Hearing & Vision Screenings @ TBD	5 5:00PM Varsity Girls Volleyball @ Pinnacle Bank Arena	6 TBD Varsity Boys Football @ TBA NE - TBA 1:00PM Varsity Girls Volleyball @ Pinnacle Bank Arena	7 8:00AM High School Play Production @ Gortenberg High School 1:00PM Varsity Girls Volleyball @ Bob Denney Sports Center
8	9	10 3:00PM Junior High Girls Wrestling @ Hershey High School	11	12 8:00AM No School-Teacher Work Day! @ TBD	13 TBD Varsity Boys Football @ TBA NE - TBA	14
15	16 8:00AM Operation Christmas Child @ Arnold High School - Gym 9:00AM Claster County Government Day @ TBD	17 8:00AM High School Play Production @ Callaway High School	18 1:30PM 1:30 Dismissal-Teacher In-Service @ TBD	19	20	21
22	23 TBD Varsity Boys Football @ University of Nebraska - Lincoln	24 2:40PM 2:40 Dismissal @ TBD	25 8:00AM No School-Thanksgiving Break! @ TBD	26 8:00AM No School-Thanksgiving Break! @ TBD	27 8:00AM No School-Thanksgiving Break! @ TBD	28
29	30 9:00AM High School Play Production @ Cambridge High School	1	2	3	4	5



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