Best wishes to all for a joyous Christmas season and a wonderful New Year!

New Elementary School Playground 2015

A committee of teachers and parents have begun the process of getting new playground equipment for the elementary school. The committee has visited several playgrounds and has three current proposals from three different vendors. The new playground will replace the multi-colored tube slide and the wood structure; the furthest north structure will stay. The color of the new structure will coordinate with the EXISTING structure. In addition to the new structure, the playground will also have a rubber tile surface. The committee's goals are to provide a playground that is a safe and fun environment for students for many years to come.

Currently, the fund for the playground sits at $60,000; $50,000 more is needed to reach our goal of $110,000. At the December 8th school board meeting, board members will be listening to presentations from three different vendors. A decision on THE vendor is expected AT THIS board meeting.

If you are willing to donate to the playground fund, please contact Joe Brehmer (402-687-2655) or Lisa Christiansen (402-687-2629) of the Lyons-Decatur School Foundation, Superintendent Mr. Fred Hansen (402-687-2363), or any playground committee member (Carrie Andersen, April Archer, Tina Ronnfeldt, and Bruce Knaak). This donation will be tax deductible through the school foundation. We have been fund raising through the sale of cookie dough for several years and we want to make this dream become a reality next spring!
Lyons-Decatur NeSA (Nebraska State Assessment) Results,
By Derek Lahm, Principal

At the end of April each spring our students participate in taking a mandatory statewide assessment. This test is important to all schools across the state. It tests our student’s abilities in reading, math and science. Once students complete all the tests across the state, the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) compiles the scores and compares them to all the schools in the state. Once the comparisons are made each school receives a ranking of how well they performed to the other schools. There are around 250 schools in the state and each school receives a ranking in each subject. 1 is considered the best score in the whole state and 250 (approx.) being the lowest score in the state.

Lyons-Decatur Northeast scores are listed here. Note that elementary is considered grades 3 through 5. Junior high is considered 6th grade through 8th grade and the secondary school is comprised of grades 9 through 12, but only the 11th grade class takes the tests.

There are some things to consider when looking at these results. The first is that one class only, the junior class, represents our entire high school. The results are not necessarily a reflection of the abilities of the rest of the grades 9-12. Another thing to consider is the amount of individual student growth each student achieves. The NDE ranks schools according to how much each individual student, district wide, progresses their academic abilities in both reading and math. As you can see, LDNE ranks rather high in both these areas across the state.

What does all this mean? It means that our students, regardless of their current ability level, are making academic gains as compared with their peers across the state of Nebraska. It also means that our school is a dynamic entity in working together as a staff and a community to improve each individual student every day.

**ELEMENTARY (Grades 3-5)**

**Reading Score:** 119.07
State Ranking: 112th/248 total schools
State Ranking for Growth of Same Students: 44th/245 total schools

**Math Score:** 116.37
State Ranking: 91st/248 total schools
State Ranking for Growth of Same Students: 3rd/245 total schools

**Science Score:** 126.92
State Ranking: 30th/225 total schools

**Writing Score:** 49
State Ranking: 23rd/223 total schools
* indicates a different scoring method than the other assessments.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL (Grade 6-8)**

**Reading Score:** 127.22
State Ranking: 57th/249 total schools
State Ranking for Growth of Same Students: 215th/249 total schools

**Math Score:** 117.11
State Ranking: 60th/249 total schools
State Ranking for Growth of Same Students: 179th/249 total schools

**Science Score:** 96.36
State Ranking: 185th/224 total schools

**SECONDARY (Grades 9-12)**

**Reading Score:** 104.00
State Ranking: 189th/230 total schools

**Math Score:** 105.45
State Ranking: 144th/230 total schools

**Science Score:** 102.64
State Ranking: 169th/230 total schools

**DISTRICT (Grades 3-12)**

**Reading Score:** 120.60
State Ranking: 99th/249 total schools

**Math Score:** 115.33
State Ranking: 81st/249 total schools

**Science Score:** 108.63
State Ranking: 119th/249 total schools

**INDIVIDUAL STUDENT GROWTH DISTRICT WIDE**

**Reading Ranking:** 114th/249 total schools
**Math Ranking:** 16th/249 total schools
“It’s the most wonderful time of the year.” I would venture to guess that for many of you, the time leading up to Christmas and New Years is a special and exciting time. The Christmas music plays in our homes, cars, and stores, and it stirs up so many memories. The smells of so many wonderful foods fill our homes and hopefully my desk (hint, hint). And…people even seem to be in a better mood, so getting together with family and friends is more enjoyable. It really is the most wonderful time of the year.

And then for others, this may be a very difficult time of the year. People have lost loved ones. Some may be without a job and have several children they are trying to provide. Maybe this holiday will be one spent alone or away from family.

Regardless of your circumstances, one thing rings true: we all long for and need positive relationships in our lives. We need people pouring into our lives in real and meaningful ways. We need people who dig past the surface level of our lives to find out what is really happening.

Our kids need us to be real and present in their lives. Here are some ideas for you on a daily basis to pour into your child(ren)’s lives:

1) Give them a hug and squeeze harder when they resist.
2) Turn the television off for 15 minutes and have a conversation.
3) Drive for 30 minutes with the radio on your favorite station and sing (even if no one else in the car is singing). It may drive them crazy, but they will remember it for a lifetime.
4) Play some form of ball or frisbee game. (The importance of your child(ren) to be able to catch and throw a ball OR frisbee go far beyond playing sports in school.)
5) Play some of your favorite music AND sing and dance to it.
6) Find a show on television that you watch and discuss every week.
7) Ask them to play a game or show you how to do something on the computer or other device.
8) Play a game even if it is as simple as the card game War.
9) Create an ACTIVE tradition such as cooking or baking together OR playing a certain game without the television.
10) Play the newest video game with your child even if you are horrible.

*Do any and/or all of these and do NOT stop because your kids think you are embarrassing them. They will forever remember the fact that you poured into them.

You will be amazed at how these simple and cheap strategies will engage your child(ren). Engage in activities that your kids are interested. Trust me. Your kids want you AND NEED you in their lives more than you can ever think or imagine. Let’s make it the most wonderful time of the year by pouring into other people’s lives and especially our kid’s lives.

We challenge you to help us in this process of teaching social skills. Currently, we have chosen the Boys Town model. This model has been proven to be effective but only when the skills are REINFORCED on a daily basis and in as many social situations. Here are the 6 skills we have learned thus far, and the specific steps to acquire these skills:

1) Following Instructions
2) Accepting Criticism or a Consequence
3) Accepting “No” for an Answer
4) Greeting Others
   1. Look at the person.
   2. Use a pleasant voice.
   3. Say “hi” or “hello”
5) Getting the Teacher’s Attention
   1. Look at the teacher.
   2. Raise your hand and stay calm.
   3. Wait until the teacher says your name.
   4. Ask your question.
6) Making a Request (Asking a favor)
   1. Look at the person.
   2. Use a clear, pleasant voice.
   3. Make your request in the tone of a question by saying “Would you…” and “Please”
   4. If your request is granted, remember to say “Thank You.”
   5. If your request is denied, remember to accept “No” for an answer.
Happy Holidays from the Northeast Music Department! It has been a busy semester and there is much to look forward to as the year 2015 rolls around.

HONOR CHOIRS/BANDS
Several students have been busy performing in honor bands/choirs.

Congratulations to the following students for participating in the 2014 East Husker Conference Honor Choir at Logan view: Bayleigh Miller and Jessie Mutum.

Congratulations to the following students for participating in the Second Annual Honor Jr. High Honor Band: Layne Miller, Seth Totten, and Reid Preston.

Congratulations to Martin Long for participating in the 2014 NMEA All-state Orchestra as principal French horn. Approximately 3000 best high school musicians in the state, from Class A, B, C & D Schools, audition for the Nebraska All State.

UPCOMING MUSIC SCHEDULE
Dec. 4
Pep Band G&B Basketball vs. Scribner-Snyder @4:00 PM
Dec. 12
Secondary Christmas Concert 7:00 PM
Dec. 15
Elementary Christmas Program 7:00 PM
Dec. 16
Pep Band GBB vs. Archbishop Bergan @5:15 PM

A Time for Tradition
by Mrs. Megan Engel

This year’s Christmas concert is all about tradition! So come on down to hear your children sing in the Elementary Christmas Concert at Lyons-Decatur NE gym on Monday, Dec. 15th at 7 PM. Tradition is a big part of who we are and what we do. We’ll start the night with our Kindergarten singing some traditional Christmas Carols and end with our 5th & 6th graders singing a traditional carol from Germany. So, come on down and hear the traditional sounds of Christmas! You are the most important part of the event to us, so please plan on saving this date in the Lyons-Decatur NE gym, Monday, Dec. 15th, 2014 at 7 PM.

5th and 6th Music Field Trip
At the end of January, the 5th and 6th graders will be taking a field trip for Music. They will be traveling to Omaha to see the Omaha Symphony. This season's performance is titled: Once Upon A Time. In the performance, literature and music collide in a wonderful group of stories. The show will feature Tchaikovsky's "Romeo & Juliet", Mendelssohn's "A Midsummer Night's Dream", Gustav Holst's "Mars" from "The Planets", and John Williams' "Harry Potter".

Semester Tests:
Grades 7-12 will have semester tests December 18th and 19th school will dismiss at 2:20 both days.
Elementary will dismiss at 3:30 on Wednesday, December 17th for the Christmas Holiday. Classes will resume on January 6th, 2015.
Notification of School Schedule Changes:
The sources we will use to notify people of any changes in our school time schedule will be...
1. ADT – early notification system
2. 107.9 FM – AM 84 Radio West Point
3. WOW T– Channel 6 Omaha
4. KETV – Channel 7 Omaha
5. KMTV – Channel 3 Omaha
6. KTIV – Channel 4 Sioux City (www.ktiv.com)

We will use the ADT early notification system this winter, along with the other methods of communication listed above. Your caller I.D. will show a school number or 281-207-4890. Please notify us if you need to change the number or method you have previously chosen or want to add a number.

Dress Warm:
As the weather turns cold, elementary students are encouraged to bring hats, gloves and boots to school as we will be going outside for recess whenever possible.

E-Library Update
The ESU 2 e-library is growing! Have you tried it out yet? On November 6, ESU 2 in Fremont spent a grand total of $19,906.27 to purchase 787 new books for the elementary collection and 547 new books for the middle/high school collection. Check it out to see if your favorite books have been added!

Remember, if a book you want is currently checked out to someone else you can put your name on the hold list. Simply click on “Add Hold,” and the title is added to your queue. When your name comes up on the hold list, the system will send an email to the address you provided to let you know it is available for checkout. You have 2 days from the date of the notification to check out the title. If you do not check out the book within that time, it will become available for the next person on the hold list.

Visit http://esuelem.axis360.baker-taylor.com/ for the elementary collection and http://esuhs.axis360.baker-taylor.com/ for the middle/high school collection. Links to both collections are also located on the school website under “Parent and Student Resources” and “Online Media Resources.”

Please contact Mrs. Smith at melissasmith@esu2.org if you have any questions about using the e-library.

DIBELS
By Rachel Dolezal, Title I Coordinator
DIBELS stands for Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy Skills. Through the three DIBELS testing measures, reading fluency, comprehension and phonemic awareness, I have been able to determine an early literacy skills baseline for all students in Grades K-6. The results are used to evaluate individual student development. Through students’ test scores the Title I teacher has targeted the students to receive interventions that aide in reading comprehension, fluency, and phonemic awareness. To ensure growth, progress monitoring is done weekly. Students that have achieved the set goal are then integrated back into the regular classroom.

Annual Food Drive
LDNE students and staff will once again be participating in our annual Food Drive for the Community Hearts and Hands, Inc. On December 1st through December 17th we will be accepting donations of non-perishable food items that will later be distributed throughout our local communities. FBLA, FFA, and Student Council each year help to sponsor this important activity and have set this year’s goal at 2500 cans. Throughout the 2 1/2 weeks before Christmas vacation we will have many activities to help us reach our goal. We encourage anyone to drop off food items at the school to help us help others.
What Parents Need to Know about Enterovirus D68

Every year, millions of children in the United States catch enteroviruses that can cause coughing, sneezing, and fever. This year, the enterovirus that is most commonly causing respiratory illness in children across the country is enterovirus-D68 (EV-D68). Take basic steps to keep your child from getting and spreading EV-D68.

Infections with enteroviruses are usually common in the United States during summer and fall. This year, beginning in mid-August, states started seeing more children in hospitals with severe respiratory illness caused by EV-D68. Since then, CDC and states have been doing more testing, and have found that EV-D68 is making people sick in almost all states. Most of the cases have been among children. EV-D68 is not new, but it hasn't been as common in the past. While this has been a big year for EV-D68 infections, CDC expects the number of cases to taper off by late fall.

Children are at higher risk for EV-D68

Infants, children, and teenagers are at higher risk than adults for getting infected and sick with enteroviruses like EV-D68. That's because they have not been exposed to these types of viruses before, and they do not yet have immunity (protection) built up to fight the disease. If your child has asthma, he or she may be at greater risk for severe respiratory illness from EV-D68.

Know the signs of symptoms of EV-D68

EV-D68 can cause mild to severe respiratory illness.

- Mild symptoms may include fever, runny nose, sneezing, cough, and body and muscle aches.
- Severe symptoms may include wheezing and difficulty breathing.

Call your child's doctor if he or she is having difficulty breathing, if you feel you are unable to control symptoms, or if symptoms are getting worse. If your child develops severe illness, he or she may need to be hospitalized.

Help protect your family from EV-D68

To help avoid catching and spreading EV-D68, parents and children should always follow basic steps to stay healthy.

- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. Washing hands correctly is the most important thing you can do to stay healthy. See Handwashing: Clean Hands Save Lives.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

- Avoid close contact, such as kissing, hugging, and sharing cups or eating utensils, with people who are sick.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or shirt sleeve, not your hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as toys and doorknobs, especially if someone is sick.
- Stay home when you are sick and keep sick children out of school.

EV-D68 treatment

There is no specific treatment for EV-D68. Talk to your child's doctor about the best way to control his or her symptoms.

If your child has asthma

Children with asthma are particularly at risk for severe symptoms from EV-D68 infection. Therefore, if your child has asthma, take some steps to prepare in case he or she catches EV-D68. CDC recommends you do the following to help maintain control of your child's asthma during this time:

- Discuss and update your child's asthma action plan with his or her doctor.
- Make sure your child takes his or her prescribed asthma medications as directed, especially long-term control medication(s).
- Make sure your child knows to keep asthma reliever medication with him or her or has access to it at all times.
- Get your child a flu vaccine, since flu and other respiratory infections can trigger an asthma attack. See Vaccination: Who Should Do It, Who Should Not and Who Should Take Precautions.
- If your child develops new or worsening asthma symptoms, follow the steps of his or her asthma action plan. If symptoms do not go away, call your child's doctor right away.
- Make sure caregiver(s) and/or teacher(s) are aware of the child's condition, and that they know how to help if the child experiences any symptoms related to asthma.
- Call your child's doctor if he or she is having difficulty breathing, if you feel you are unable to control symptoms, or if symptoms are getting worse.

For more information, see the following Centers for Disease Control and Prevention web site:
http://www.cdc.gov/features/evd68/
Students in Mock Trial Learn the Legal System
By Paul Wantz, Guidance Counselor

The Mock Trial Case for this year was a felony case involving arson of a gnome factory and murder of a worker caught in the fire. The students prepared to be either the Prosecution or Defendant, preparing questions and answers. The 2014 Mock Trial Team was composed of Lawyers: Brent Miller, Amelia Schlichting, and Brock Vetick. The Witnesses were Alec Anderson, Brianne Haskell, Martin Long, Mickayla Petersen, and Blair Preston. The Production Assistant was Lupita Prieto, and the Attorney-Coach/Advisor was Mr. Dan Smith.

On Monday, November 10, 2014, the Team traveled to the Cedar County Courthouse in Hartington for competition. The Team lost their first close match against one of the two South Sioux City teams, won in the second round against the other South Sioux City team, and then lost in the third round to the Lutheran High team, finishing 1-2. This year, the format was double elimination from the beginning. We were edged out, thus ending our season. The students should be congratulated on their hard work and dedication!

Pictured below are the Mock Trial members:

From the Guidance Office
By Paul Wantz, Guidance Counselor

ACT: The next ACT test of the year is scheduled for February 7, 2015. Juniors traditionally take the test in April. This year, the April test is April 18th with an application postmark deadline of March 13, 2015. Also, remember that Lyons-Decatur is an ACT test site for all except the June test.

Senior Information: Each Senior has a mailbox, located in the Guidance Office. Information pertaining to scholarships, career interests, and college planning is being placed in the individual boxes on a regular basis for the students. Seniors are encouraged to check their mailbox on a weekly basis.

College Visits: Seniors and Juniors planning to continue their education beyond high school should be thinking about arranging a college campus visit. Campus visits are an important part of selecting a college, and parents are encouraged to accompany their son or daughter whenever possible. Campus visits are arranged through the Guidance Office.

Scholarship Information: As scholarship information arrives, it is posted on the Guidance Office bulletin board and placed in Senior mailboxes. Seniors need to be proactive in searching for financial aid.

NE DEPARTMENT OF ED RULE 51
Nebraska Department of Education Rule 51, Regulations and Standards for Education Programs, May 15, 2010 requires that school districts destroy all personally identifiable Special Education data maintained on students five years after the completion of the activities for which special education funds were used. NDE Rule 51 also requires the school to notify parents prior to the destruction of these records so that parents may request this personally identifiable data contained in the Special Education Records. Any Special Education record that has been maintained by the school for more than five years after it was no longer needed is now scheduled to be destroyed by shredding. If you would like copies of data pertinent to your child please inform Joni Hegge, Head of Resource for the Lyons-Decatur Northeast School, on or before December 31, 2013.
The Lyons-Decatur Northeast FFA Chapter has had a successful first semester of school and looking forward to even more success in the future. Highlights from the first semester include:
Mickayla Petersen & Alec Anderson, 6th Place in the National Agriscience Fair SS IV
Brock Vetick, 9th Place in the National Agriscience Fair PST I
Kelly Wakeley & Lexie Bacon, 13th Place in the National Agriscience Fair PST III
Tessie Collins earned district champion honors in the Dairy Cattle Selection Event.

These and too many more honors to list have made the semester fly by. Students are preparing for District Leadership Skills Events held on November 25, 2014. The chapter is also participating in the “I Believe in the Future of Ag” campaign again this year. Many of you may have already received information about this opportunity to support our chapter and the state wide organization. If you need more information on our Agricultural Education Program or the FFA Chapter, please visit the school website, or contact Kevin Anderson at keanders@esu2.org.

Parent Reminder
Barricades are placed on the northeast side and east side in the driveway near the playground. These were put in place to keep children safe on the playground before, during, and after school. PLEASE DO NOT DRIVE AROUND the barricades to pick up your child by the locker room doors. The driveway should be used only for school personnel and deliveries.

All visitors must sign in at the Superintendent’s Office, when entering the school building.

All parents need to come to the front office to report in. Parents are not allowed to go to classrooms unless a meeting has been previously set up, or you are directed by office staff to go to classroom. If you need to drop something off for your child, leave it in the office for pickup by your child.

High School students arriving prior to 8:00 a.m. and do not have a morning activity, must remain in the lobby. You may only go to classrooms if it is pre-approved by the teacher. You may not go to the gym to sit as practices may be occurring.

Elementary and high school students may not be in the building for any reason after school unless you are in a sponsored activity.

Parents who are picking up a student(s) for illness, appointment or any reason can pick them up at the front office. We ask that a note be sent ahead of time or a phone call to the principal’s office early enough to get the student(s) ready.