

EAGLE PROFILE

Official Newsletter of USD 303

Eagle Cheer

The year for cheerleaders began as soon as it was over last spring. We try to practice or just get together to brainstorm great ideas for the upcoming year.

In August, we attended the Dodge City Spirit Spreader, a day camp organized by KSHSAA. There, the girls learned new cheers, a dance and worked on team building activities.

We hosted a Future Cheer Camp for girls ages preschool-6th grade. We dance to Get Back Up Again from the movie Trolls. It was postponed for a few weeks because of a crazy fall thunder storm that came through. During the month of January we held another Future Eagle Camp where we danced to Freedom by Pitbull. We shared our dance with those in attendance at the NCHS basketball game on January 30th.

The cheerleaders already have big plans for the upcoming summer and school year. We hope to attend an overnight camp to really expand our skills and spend time bonding with the team. They also wish to have more time to work with our Future Eagles throughout the summer; building confidence and teaching more specific skills!

Last but not least, we ALWAYS love cheering on our Eagles!! Traveling to football and basketball games, rocking the home football field, packing the gym for home volleyball and basketball games, we love to support our blue and white! Go Eagles!



Odd English (7,9, and 11 grades that is)

Hard to believe we are in the final stretch of the school year. I've enjoyed my second year teaching the "odd" English classes. The final nine weeks will zip by. I hope the juniors don't dread their final research paper assignment too much.

The juniors in English III are finishing up a mini research project. They picked a song inspired by a historical event and will present their findings after spring break. As a class, we are finally up to contemporary authors. We started the year with pre-colonial writings filled with archaic language. It was a struggle for most, but it will pay off when the post-WWII literature is a walk in the park.

Freshmen are coming off of their poetry unit. We had some serious and comical haikus. They finished their poetry cakes (pictured).

With a partner, they received a piece of cardboard and had to figure out how to construct a 3D slice of cake. Each partner then glued



Title I Notification

During Mrs. Albers maternity leave, Jodi Gantz has been teaching 1st Grade. Under the No Child Left Behind Act, children who qualify for Title I services have a right to be taught by “highly qualified” teachers. Because our school received federal funds under Title I, we must inform you Jodi Gantz is not considered “highly qualified” to teach this subject at your child’s grade level.

In order to be considered “highly qualified” under the federal law, teachers hired before the 2002-2003 school year must have obtained full state certification, hold at least a bachelor’s degree and either demonstrate competence in all academic subjects in which the teacher teaches based on a high, objective, uniform state standard of evaluation or meet the same requirements as a newly hired teacher. Newly hired (hired after the beginning of the 2002-03 school year) elementary teachers must have full state certification, hold a bachelor’s degree, and pass a state test for teachers in reading, writing, and other areas of the elementary curriculum.

Even though Mrs. Gantz does not meet the requirements to be considered “highly qualified”, the elementary staff, USD 303 School Board, and I have full faith in her ability to provide a high quality education for your child during Mrs. Albers absence. It is also important to understand that Mrs. Albers has and will continue to work closely with Mrs. Gantz to develop lesson plans and provide instructional support during this time. Mrs. Gantz is an invaluable and important part of our NCES staff.

If you have questions about your child’s assignment to this class, please contact Derek Reinhardt, PreK-6 Principal/Superintendent.

their rhyming poem on one side. The result is a nice taste of their poetry in an attractive package. The 7th grade liked seeing what the freshmen did so much that they are now making a poetry cake as a challenge.

The 7th grade just wrapped up a 300-page class novel. Most did not appreciate the thickness of the book when we first picked it up. Hopefully, they now realize that a good story is more important than the length of a book. The 7th grade continues to write, read, and research. We’ve been all over the place this nine weeks. From Kipling’s India to the Holocaust to family relationships at home, we’ve learned empathy, character, bravery, and tolerance.

NCES Students Learn to Cupstack

For the past 3 weeks the K-6th grade students have been working extremely hard fine tuning their skills in Cup Stacking. There are many benefits to the sport of Cup Stacking but one of the biggest benefits is the use of the right and left parts of the brain when cup stacking. When students sport stack they are crossing the ‘midline’ of their bodies and developing new connections in their brains. Cup stacking also promotes agility, hand-eye coordination and concentration.

Friday, March 15th was the day of the 3rd Annual Ness City Elementary School Cup Stacking Tournament. This year we had winners from each grade level and winners from each division (K-1, 2-3, 4-6). The winners from each division then competed against each other for the Ultimate Championship. As the students



Pictured above are our grade level winners in each cup stacking configuration!

were waiting for their turn they were able to watch highlights from the 2016 National Cup Stacking Tournament. Many parents were able to attend and enjoy a fun morning!

A huge thank you goes out to Monty Pfannenstiel (Mini Mart) and Stephanie Rebel (Recreation Commission) for providing all of the winners with prizes. Congratulations to all of the winners and great job to all of the students for competing hard and showing great sportsmanship throughout the tournament.



Left: The ultimate champions for each cup stacking configuration for all grade levels. Savannah was the ultimate champion for the Cycle, and MaKaylah was the ultimate champion for the 4 stacks of 3, 3-6-3, and the 6-6!

Right: All the participants took a picture together to commemorate their adventures in cup stacking after the tournament!

What is a Behavior Contract?

Is your child struggling with their behavior at school? Maybe they're having a hard time following the rules or getting along with others. This can be a hard place to be as a parent. Often, children with disabilities or special health-care needs use their behavior to tell us something is not okay with them. That inappropriate behavior may be the only way that the child can communicate to others that something is not right. Even though they are using poor behavior choices to communicate, it doesn't mean that they know why they are acting a certain way or even what's wrong.

Many times younger children or those with disabilities or special health-care needs don't understand why they demonstrate the poor behavior choices that they do, it is just something that happens. If your child is having a lot of meltdowns, disrupting class, being aggressive, refusing to do schoolwork, you might feel like whatever you or your child's teachers are doing just isn't working.

This is when your school might decide to use a positive behavior support plan which is designed to help children replace problem behaviors with more positive ones. A positive behavior support plan says how the adults in your child's life (parents, teachers, school staff, and other caregivers) are going to support your child and teach them the skills that they need to use more positive behavior. The things the adults do are usually called positive behavior supports.

The behavior intervention plan is designed to help children use more positive behaviors. A behavior intervention plan can help your child learn problem-solving skills and better ways to get their needs met so that they don't have as many problem behaviors in school. A good behavior intervention plan focuses more on the rewards your child will get for positive behavior than on anything

Severe Weather Report

To Report a severe weather event you have to call your local emergency management and report tornadoes, hail, or thunderstorms.

- Call local emergency management office Ness County
- (785-798-2080)
- @NWS Dodge City |

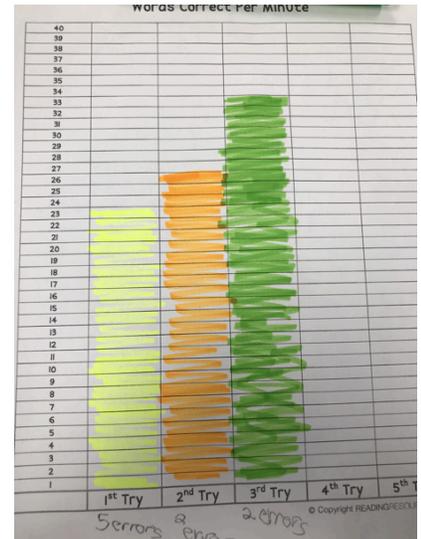


Created by Erick Gomez

negative that might happen after a problem behavior. It should include information on what the teachers, school staff, or other caregivers are expected to do—and what your child is expected to do too. A behavior intervention plan might be something you can adapt to use at home and help your child use more positive behavior there too. The child’s school should review the behavior intervention plan often and change it as needed. After all, your child is always growing and changing; things that worked at first might not work later. It is important that parents are part of the process, after all, you are the biggest expert on your child and will probably have a lot of ideas that will help with the process. If you have questions or concerns about your child’s behavior at school, please contact your child’s regular education teacher or principal. They can help to get the process started.

Goal Setting in Title I

Some may say that goal setting is something for the adult world. However, research shows that youngsters are very driven by setting their own goals. Often in Title I Reading, we do one minute fluency reads. Students in my class will set a goal before they do their cold read. A cold read is the very first time the passage is read. I encourage my students to set challenging but realistic goals. When we do timed readings, we will typically read the same passage 3-4 times. Rereading the same passage can improve many aspects of reading such as reading rate, accuracy, and comprehension. When choosing a passage, I am sure to select a passage that is specific to each student’s independent reading level. At the end of each read the score is calculated by counting the number of words read correctly within the 1 minute. After each read, the student graphs the number of words he/she read correctly such as the one shown below so they can monitor their progress.



Ms. James Takes the Reigns from Mrs. Kepple

In my classroom this semester so far that I have taken over for Mrs. Kepple, all of my classes (juniors, seniors, and 8th grade) have done different activities that have been fun and challenging at the same time. With my juniors, who are in my American History class, we went in depth over World War 2 and specifically the Holocaust. This was an intriguing, challenging, and eye opening unit for the students. One thing that they really enjoyed was the “Holocaust Photo Narrative” that they did in groups. The students were broken up into groups and given a packet of 30 pictures that were pictures from the beginning of the Holocaust and WW2, events that happened during the Holocaust, and the end of the Holocaust. This was eye opening and challenging for the juniors because they were only allowed to choose 5 out of the 30 pictures that they felt best summarized the Holocaust and World War 2. The students enjoyed this activity because they were able to work in groups and they could see a visual representation of the events that led up to the Holocaust, events during the Holocaust, and the liberation of the concentration camps. I feel like the students got a lot out of the activity.

With my seniors, we discussed the French Revolution and in place of a test, they were to do a group project and they turned out wonderful! They got to choose between building a guillotine, making a presentation, making a music video, making a news cast, and much more that described what they learned about during the French Revolution. The students really enjoyed this activity because they got to be hands on and work in groups. I was very proud of how they collaborated and how their projects turned out. The 8th grade also got to do a project in place of a test. We discussed “Westward Expansion” and the events that led to people in the United States moving West. Their project was to present a lesson to the class over something they researched and learned based on “Westward Expansion”. This was fun to watch because the students got to work in groups and they were very excited when they got to be the teacher for the day and be in “control” of the classroom and what their peers were learning.

My time so far at Ness City Jr./Sr. High has been amazing and I am so thankful for this opportunity to work with an amazing staff and students! These students are some of the most fun, cooperative, and creative kids I have worked with and I am looking forward to the rest of the semester. We are going to be doing more hands on activities and trying new learning techniques! I can’t wait to see what’s in store!

FACS News

Students within the FACS curriculum have been busy this quarter. Jayme Tillitson, the only student in Teaching as a Career is working online completing the course. This course is one offered through the Peakgetfueled computer system offered by the Southwest Area Service Center.

The Human Growth and Development, students have been caring for the Realityworks Babies. These babies require diaper changes, bottle feeding, burping, rocking, etc. Most students are excited when the babies arrive

and change their attitude after taking the baby home. Hopefully, the experience will encourage waiting until older before having children.

Nutrition and Wellness classes have been exploring the major nutrients: carbohydrates, fats and now proteins. In addition to learning information from the textbook students will be exploring new trends in protein research. Taking a break from “nutrition” to bake cupcakes for Family Fun Night was a welcome change for the students. Tracking and reconciling a checkbook for six months is the current activity in Personal and Consumer Finance. Students are using a program that is supplied by First State Bank, which provides financial information in the form of deposits, check writing, debits and other personal transactions that must be recorded and reconciled with bank statements.

Community Connection students have been working with various grade level teachers and secretaries and also working on pages for the school yearbook. Each has selected areas that are related to their prospective career fields.

Career investigation has been the order of the day for the 8th graders who recently presented their career projects to the class. Most were in the form of Google Slides, a couple students created movies, and some were simply informational speeches. All were interesting.

7th graders at the moment are beginning to explore cooking. They have created a few foods and are anxious to have more time in the kitchen.

On Thursday, March 15th the FCS classes and FCCLA hosted the Family Fun Night that was provided for the children of Ness City and all who wish to come play the games.

Collaborative Learning in 5th Grade

This semester, 5th grade students have had a couple of opportunities to collaborate with students from around the world. One of the opportunities was through PenPal Schools online. During this, students were matched with pen pals from around the world where they would then collaborate through different online lessons. The first lesson that students learned about was the 2018 Olympics. For this particular lesson students researched information about different athletes and events in the winter olympics. They then shared his/her learning with students from all over the world. Some of the places that students paired with were Florida, Illinois, Ohio and even the Ukraine. Students would then get to comment and collaborate, learning new information from his/her pen pal.

The other lesson that students worked on was called World of Food. For this lesson students were able to either complete a food journal for a week or research a dish, and then make it. Students really enjoyed getting to do this, and loved getting to share with classmates about what they made. I even got a taste of a slice of key lime (Blake Madden), an apple pie (Izzi Reinhardt), as well as a pineapple upside down cake (Sabryn Copeland)!

“I liked learning about the World of Food. I learned from one of my pen pals that a pierogi is a dough dumpling which is stuffed with either potatoes or cheese. I would like to try it,” said Malachi Durham.

Another opportunity that students have had this semester is to send postcards to different states about our read aloud, “Wonder.” Students were to come up with a quote, or precept that meant a lot to them and then create a postcard to send to another class that has read “Wonder.” Some of the quotes that students came up with were, “Be yourself and don’t let anyone change that,” (Gretchen Copeland) and “You can help people in so many ways (Cruz Garcia).” I think it is important that students get the

opportunity to collaborate with students from other schools because it really broadens their learning from outside of our small community.



Yellow cake with strawberries, walnuts and homemade frosting-- made by Adalaiza Morales



IMMUNIZATION NOTICE/HEALTH ASSESSMENTS

All students enrolling in any district school shall provide the building principal with proof of immunization of certain diseases or furnish documents to satisfy statutory requirements. Booster shots required by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Environment are also required.

A copy of this policy and the applicable state law shall be distributed to students or their parents each school year. The superintendent shall issue a news release each August explaining the required inoculations and booster shots. Parents may delegate in writing their authority to consent to immunizations. If the parent is not reasonably available, and the authority to consent has been denied as provided in law, individuals other than the parent may consent to the immunizations as provided for in current law.

Students who fail to provide the documentation required by law maybe excluded from school by the superintendent until statutory requirements are satisfied. Notice of exclusion shall be given to the parents/guardians as prescribed by law. Students who are not immunized against a particular disease(s) may be excluded from school during any outbreak.

Each principal shall forward evidence of compliance with the inoculation law to other schools or school districts when requested by the school or by the student's parent/guardians.

All students up to the age of nine are required to submit evidence that they have undergone a health assessment prior to entering kindergarten or before enrolling in the district for the first time.

All students engaged in activities covered by appropriate KSHSAA rules shall provide the building principal with proof of a physical examination.

Principals shall work cooperatively with local, county and state health to disseminate on or before May 15th of each year materials related to the availability of health assessments and inoculations.

Kansas Administrative Regulation 28-1-20 — Immunizations required for (a) Except as provided in K.S.A. 75-5209(b) and amendments thereto, each child or adolescent shall be required to receive the following vaccinations before enrolling in any Kansas school: Diphtheria; Hepatitis B; Measles (rubeola); Mumps; Pertussis (whooping cough); Poliomyelitis; Rubella (German measles); Tetanus; and Varicella (chickenpox), unless proof of prior varicella disease is provided. The proof shall be verified by one of the following:

- The signed statement of a physician indicating the child's or adolescent's date of this illness;
- The signed statement of a parent indicating the child's or adolescent's date of this illness; or
- Laboratory evidence of varicella immunity.

(b) The immunization record of each pupil shall document that the pupil has received the vaccinations specified in subsection (a) from a licensed physician or local health department in accordance with the "recommended childhood and adolescent immunization schedule — United States 2003" approved by the advisory committee on immunization practices and hereby adopted by reference. (Authorized by K.S.A. 72-5211; implementing K.S.A. 75-5209; effective E-79-18, July 20, 1978; effective May 1, 1979; amended April 9, 2004.)

Career Advisory Period

Career Advisory Period (CAP) is in its second year of existence at Ness City High School. Each week grades 9-12 and one time per month grades 7-8 meet with their designated advisor. There are three objectives of CAP: 1) Prepare students for life and careers after high school, 2) teach social/emotional skills, and 3) build school unity through relationship-building activities.

The second semester has been busy! Our semester began with watching a video from a guest speaker we had first semester about bullying in schools and what bystanders can do to stop bullying behaviors. Some of the other activities our students have participated in include building digital resumes and resume documents. The Seniors have been busy filling out scholarships. Eighth through eleventh grades completed the pre-enrollment process in the Career Cruising program. Our Student Council led a mixer focused on teaching students different dances before the Homecoming dance. The students watched a video and discussed the importance of time management. We hope to end the semester with more student mixer activities as well as videos focused on topics such as time management, hard work, and tolerance.

Oral Communications

The school year is winding down, and the seniors in Oral Communications have been busy. This semester has really pushed the students step out of their comfort zone. We began the semester by writing and video-taping newscasts about activities going on in the high school. Student groups created and acted out their own one-act plays. The last couple of weeks have been focused on reciting poetry. The students wrote poems about what their "world" would be like if they could make rules. We watched Dead Poet Society and discussed the importance of finding their desire and drive in life as well as trying to see people/things from a different perspective. After

spring break, they will begin writing their graduation speeches. I can not wait to hear about their memories of the last 13 years as well as any advice they may have to share with underclassmen.

NCHS to participate in the ACT district testing program

Recently, ACT, Inc. has started a new testing program allowing school districts to offer the ACT test on campus during a school day. This is in addition to the seven regularly scheduled Saturdays that are offered throughout the school year. Over the years, I have found that many of the traditional Saturday test dates seem to conflict with the busy schedules of many of our students and allowing them the opportunity to test on campus during the school day will give students another option without having to worry about those conflicts. In addition, by having students take the ACT in a familiar environment they may perform at higher level on the test. Considering this, NCHS has registered to offer the ACT on April 3rd of this school year. We have 22 juniors and seniors registered to take the ACT on this school day. My future plans are to register NCHS to offer the ACT on a school day in the fall semester. This is an option offered to students who want to take the ACT but is not mandatory. The cost of taking the test is the same as all other test dates and will be paid by the student. Our goal is to make taking the test more convenient for our busy students in a familiar environment.

Also, April 3rd, we will be giving the PreACT to all sophomores. This will be done at no cost to the sophomore students or their families! The PreACT will provide students a predicted ACT score which will help complement the many decisions students must make in their college and career readiness planning. One of the biggest questions students have as they enter their junior and senior years is whether or not they should take the ACT. Having this predicted score should help answer some of these questions before spending the money on the ACT. This will also help students become aware of areas in which they may need to focus a little more attention before taking the ACT their junior and senior years.

School Board Approves Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)

It took a team of three hard working teachers almost two years to put together a complete and updated Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) for the School District. With help from local Law Enforcement, Emergency Management, Homeland Security, ESSDACK Crisis Team, and countless other professionals and experts, Tonya Fenley, Catherine McIntosh, and Patrick Younger worked countless hours to develop, edit, modify, and ultimately publish the EOP for the School Board to Approve. The USD 303 EOP can be found on the District Webpage under the District Info tab. So, what is an EOP?

The purpose of the Ness City School Emergency Operations Plan (School EOP) is to identify and respond to incidents by outlining the responsibilities and duties of Ness City and its employees. Developing, maintaining, and exercising the plan empowers employees in an incident to act quickly and knowledgeably. In addition, the plan educates staff, faculty, students, and other key stakeholders on their roles and responsibilities before, during, and after an incident. This plan provides parents and other members of the community with assurances that Ness City School District has established guidelines and procedures to respond to incidents/hazards in an effective way. The EOP helps to outline what all school staff will do before, during, and after a crisis. A crisis can range from a fire, tornado, chemical spill, bomb threat, intruder, and active shooter.

The goal of the EOP is to prepare all involved for any foreseeable crisis. The problem with planning is there are always “what ifs” and things you just don’t think about until it happens. The EOP is designed to help those involved stay calm, so they can overcome the “what ifs” and other unforeseeable obstacles.

As part of the EOP process, USD 303 will be training all staff in the ALICE process. ALICE stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate. We will be sending the Crisis Management Team to training in April along with a member of Local Law Enforcement. These individuals will then work to train all USD 303 staff. We have also gone through the EOP and provided all staff with a procedures flip chart that outlines what to do in specific crisis or emergencies. Teachers will also be talking with students about some of these procedures during class. If your child comes home and shares that he/she talked about hiding in the classroom and not opening the door for someone, it is because we have been working on these procedures. It is important to understand, at this time, we will not be practicing evacuation drills with our students. Currently, experts believe that it is better to train the staff on what to do, and have them direct students during a crisis or emergency. There are two reasons for this 1. the drills can be very traumatizing for the students, and 2. if we were to have an intruder or active shooter, we don’t want him/her to know what are procedure is.

In the event of a school evacuation, parents will receive notification through the County Alert System of what is occurring and where they need to go to pick up their children. It is important for all parents, relatives, and patrons understand that we will implement a Reunification Process during these situations. Crisis and Emergency can be very hectic and emotional experiences. It is important to stay calm and allow the process to take place so that we don’t cause further issues. The reunification process is below:

REUNIFICATION PROCESS

DIRECTIONS:

- PLEASE DO NOT SHOUT AT SCHOOL OR DISTRICT STAFF. WE ARE DOING THE BEST WE CAN TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF ALL STUDENTS.** Together, we will get through this process as quickly as possible.
- Please complete the information on the other side of this card.
- Prepare identification. (If you can not show ID, please step aside until a school personnel can verify your identity.)
- Select the line based on either the student grade level(s) or last name.
- After check in, the personnel will hand the card off to another school personnel who will retrieve the student listed on the card. If the student listed has an injury or other concerns, you may be asked to meet with a counselor.
- Once you are reunified with your student(s), you will be asked to exit through another exit to help keep this process moving as quickly as possible.

REUNIFICATION FORM	
PLEASE FILL OUT WHEN ARRIVAL:	
STUDENT NAME _____	STUDENT GRADE _____
NAME OF PERSON PICKING UP STUDENT _____	
PHONE # OF PERSON PICKING UP STUDENT _____	
RELATIONSHIP TO STUDENT _____	
PHOTO ID MATCHES PERSON PICKING UP STUDENT Y OR N _____	
PLEASE FILL OUT WHEN RECEIVING STUDENT:	
STUDENT NAME _____	STUDENT GRADE _____
STUDENT BIRTHDAY _____	
PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE _____	
SCHOOL PERSONNEL: INITIAL _____	TIME: _____

STANDARD REUNIFICATION METHOD

Student/Parent Reunification

Circumstances may occur at the school that require parents to pick up their students in a formalized, controlled release. The process of controlled release is called a reunification and may be necessary due to weather, a power outage, hazmat or if a crisis occurs at school. The Standard Reunification Method is a protocol that makes this process more predictable and less chaotic for all involved.

Notification

Parents may be notified in a number of ways. The school or district may use its broadcast phone or text message system. In some cases, students may be asked to send a text message to their parents. A reunification text message from from a student may look something like this: *“The school has closed, please pick me up at 3:25 at the main entrance. Bring your ID.”*

Parent/Guardian Expectations

If a parent or guardian is notified that a controlled release and reunification is needed, there are some expectations that parents or guardians should be aware of. First, bring identification. That will streamline things during reunification. Second, be patient. Reunification is a process that protects both the safety of the student and provides for an accountable change of custody from the school to a recognized custodial parent or guardian.

What if a Parent Can’t Pick Up Their Student?

When a parent can’t immediately go to the reunification site, students will only be release to individuals previously identified as a student’s emergency contact. Otherwise, the school will hold students until parents can pick up their student.

What if the Student Drove to School?

High school students who drive will, in most cases, not be released without completing this reunification process. There may even be instances where a student may not be allowed to remove a vehicle from the parking lot. However, there may be some circumstances that high school student may be released on their own. In those cases, parents will be notified before students are released.

How it Works

For students, the school asks that students be orderly and quiet while waiting. Students may be asked to text a message to their parents or guardians. Students are also asked not to send other text messages either in or out of

the school or reunification area. Keeping the cellular network usage at a minimum may be important during a reunification.

Reunification Cards

For parents, there are a couple of steps. If a parent is driving to the school, greater awareness of traffic and emergency vehicles is advised. Parents should park where indicated and should not abandon vehicles. Parents are asked to go to the Reunification “Check In” area and form lines based on grade level or the first letter of the last name. While in line, parents are asked to fill out a reunification card. In the case of multiple students being reunified, a separate card for each student needs to be completed.

Bring ID to Check In

During check in, identification and custody rights are confirmed. From the “Check In” area parents are directed to the “Reunification” area. There, a runner will take the card and go to the student assembly area to recover the student or students.

Interviews and Counseling

In some cases, parents may be advised that a law enforcement investigation is underway and may be advised that interviews are necessary. In extreme cases, parents may be pulled aside for emergency or medical information.

Kansas Education Systems Accreditation (KESA) and Kansans CAN

Kansans are demanding higher standards in academic skills, as well as employability and citizenship skills, and the need to move away from a “one-size-fits-all” system that relies exclusively on state assessments. This new vision for education calls for a more student-focused system that provides support and resources for individual success and will require everyone to work together to make it a reality. Together, Kansans Can.

As part of this transformation of the Kansas Educational System, the State Board of Education has laid out five outcomes they expect schools to work on to improve the educational opportunities for all students in Kansas.

Those outcomes are:

- Social-emotional growth measured locally
- Kindergarten readiness
- Individual Plan of Study based on career interest
- High school graduation
- Postsecondary success

To provide proof that schools are working toward improvement in these areas, the Kansas Education Systems Accreditation (KESA) process was developed. KESA is a five year process that school systems (districts) are required to participate in to provide proof they have taken an in depth look at the strengths and weaknesses of the district, utilized information, data, and thoughts from multiple stakeholders, developed goals and plans of actions to improve weaknesses, implemented those plans, and measured the success of those plans. The 2017/2018 school year is the first official year for the KESA process. Beginning this year, every school system that wishes to be accredited by KSDE must involve itself in the process. Many school districts across the State are just beginning the process this year. We are very proud of the fact that USD 303 entered year 3 of this process during the 2017/2018 school year because of our desire to constantly improve all aspects of our students’ educational opportunities.

During the 2015/2016 school year, school staff broke down the Five Rs (Rigor, Responsive Culture, Relevance, Relationships, and Results). The Five Rs are equivalent to each other in their importance to the quality of a system and that they encompass every concept contained in the ideas of quality education and continual improvement. Everything that educational professionals and stakeholders do, say, believe, model, teach, expect, and desire about education can be classified in at least one of the Five Rs. Using rubrics for the Five Rs, teachers dove deep into where we were as a District. What was it that we do well, and where are our weaknesses? This information was then shared with stakeholders at Site Council meetings allowing us to gather more insight into our strengths and weaknesses.

During the 2016/2017 school year, the District Leadership Team (DLT), composed of teachers and administration, developed goals based on the information developed the year before. These goals were then

shared with additional staff during professional development days, and with additional stakeholders during Site Council meetings. After gathering input from all stakeholders, the DLT developed the final goals for our initial round of the KESA process. The DLT determined that we must first improve the following before working on anything else:

- Relationships - By implementing the Kansas Social Emotional and Character Development Standards, students, staff, and patrons will work to develop skills that improve self awareness and self management. Through weekly lessons, students and staff will work together to build stronger characteristics of personal responsibility, and cooperation and concern for others.
- Relevance - Society is changing fast and so is the job market. What our students needed 10, 15, and 20 years ago is not the same as they need today to build a successful career. We have come to understand that less than 40% of jobs require a traditional four year college degree. Yet over the last 15 years, K-12 education has pushed college as the only path to success for all students. We now have a better understanding of the future of work and understand that many of our students need post-secondary training, but for the vast majority of those students, that is not traditional college. By implementing Independent Plans of Study (IPS), students will have the opportunity to explore a wide range of job opportunities, and ultimately, take classes and training opportunities for jobs they feel they would enjoy and fit within their personal strengths. As a District, we will be looking at our Post Secondary Success Rate to determine the effectiveness of the educational opportunities we offer in Ness City. Ultimately, we want to know what our students have been able to accomplish two years after graduation. Teachers will be working on developing stronger instructional practices, differentiation of instruction, and ways to modify schedules to meet individual student needs through this process.

As we entered the 2017/2018 school year, the DLT began implementing these plans. We gathered base line data through surveys of students, staff, and parents to determine where we are now. Portions of the plans have been implemented as pilots so they can be tweaked for full implementation during the 2018/2019 school year, and so that we know our plans will be effective.

During the KESA process, an Outside Visitation Team (OVT) will visit the district once a year. This team is tasked with determining if we have implemented the KESA process with fidelity, offer support and thoughts on our plans, and ultimately, provide documentation to KSDE for proof of accreditation. Our first OVT visit is scheduled for April 12.