Johnson County Central Public School Monthly Newsletter

May 2025

Superintendent Monthly Update

by Jon Rother. May 2025

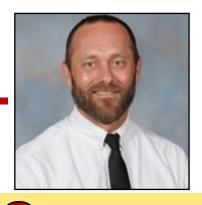


The Johnson County School Board attended the 2025 NRCSA (Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association) State Conference on March 20 in Kearney. The conference gives board members the opportunity to learn more about various topics relating to Nebraska's rural communities and schools, to speak with board members from across the state and to learn from other school districts. While at the conference, I was one of two presenters speaking about the four-day school week. Mr. Mike Apple, Superintendent of Conestoga Public Schools, spoke alongside me.

On the return trip from Kearney, the board members and myself visited Minden Public Schools to view their high school/middle school additions and renovations. In 2014, the Minden community passed a \$23.1 million bond to renovate and provide additions. Included in the bond was a new competition gym, classrooms, performing arts center and industrial arts spaces. In 2023, another bond for \$29.5 million to build an elementary school on the site failed.

The JCC school board visited the Minden site as their new facility was built on a slight grade and Minden leadership sought to unify all facilities on one site. This is significant as the previous proposed JCC facilities were to be built on a grade as well. JCC board members, Dan Jones, Jon Schmid, Kim Wellensiek, Sarah Weber and I toured the facilities to gain perspective, as well as insight, from Minden's board president Rusty Rhynalds and their current superintendent Jim Widdifield. Also along for the tour were Tim Ripp and Hannah Schafers of Clark & Enersen (JCC Contracted Architecture) and Mark Pfister of Boyd Jones (JCC Contracted Construction Manager At Risk).

On April 15, JCC board members Gail Hutt, Dan Jones, Sarah Weber and Kim Wellensiek traveled with me to Boone Central Public Schools in Albion and to Summerland Public Schools in Antelope County. Also along to see the facilities was Marcus Scheer (JCC Technology Director), Hannah Schafers of Clark & Enersen and Russ Koch (JCC Facilities Advisor).



Journey together... Creating opportunities... Committed to excellence

VOLUME 18 ISSUE 9

Jon Rother Superintendent Elementary Principal 402-335-3320

Rick Lester High School Principal 402-335-3328

Justin Damme Middle School Principal 402-864-4171 Boone Central is a district similar to JCC in that the elementary and high schools were located in Albion, while the middle school was located in Petersburg, 15 miles to the North. The Albion location also had the challenge of older facilities located in a residential area of town. This made additions and parking a challenge. A bond to move the high school South of Albion in the country failed. The district then decided to proceed with a series of additions and renovations to the current landlocked site. Through bond and building funds at over \$15 million, the district was able to unify all programming to the Albion site. This was done through major renovations (i.e. existing building "taken down to the studs," the addition of classrooms, a competition gym, a new cafeteria, purchasing homes to demolish for additional parking lots, and closing a city street to expand to approximately three city blocks). The school in Petersburg was demolished.

The JCC team was led on a tour of the facilities by Boone Central board members Ed Knott (President) and Justin Frey (Treasurer). Mr. Knott was serving on the board for some of the bond work and Mr. Frey is a graduate of Boone Central.

The touring team then drove to Summerland Public Schools. Summerland comprises the communities of Clearwater, Ewing and Orchard. A \$34.3 million school bond was passed in 2019 and the building was opened in 2020. The school was built on a new campus, in a field, approximately the same distance from each of the three communities. The Summerland school is one building serving grades PK-12 and is also built on a grade. This was my second trip to Summerland, as previous board members visited the site in 2022. We were led on tour of the facilities by Summerland Elementary Principal, Cathy Cooper and School Board President, Nate Schwager.

On the way back, the team viewed the Cross County PK-12 School. Cross County was a new building built in an open field South of Stromsburg which opened in 2008. We then viewed the Centennial school site. Centennial is also a PK-12 building located in Utica. The Centennial School District has passed multiple bonds to add a new competition gym and a performing arts center.

In all, the JCC board members took 14 hours out of their day on April 15 to research facilities. We were able to ask questions about materials being used, layout of facilities, programming needs (what spaces they needed for which classes), lessons learned and regrets. If you want to know more, reach out to our school board members and ask what they are learning about. It is a big process with a great deal of responsibility. They need to hear from YOU as well.

Retirees

As the 2024-2025 school year comes to a close, we'll be saying "goodbye" to some longtime Thunderbirds. Altogether, we will see 159 years of school experience leaving our district. We wish them the very best in their future endeavors and hope to see them in our communities!

Mr. Rick Lester 1991-1992 to 2024-2025





Mr. Rick Lester began his 41 year educational career in 1984 as the Little River High School (Kansas) Physical Education and Health Teacher (1984-1985). From there he taught PE/Health in Brewster, Kansas (1985-1987), was Activities Director and PE teacher at the Whitebead Middle School in Pauls Valley, Oklahoma (1987-1988) and then served as Assistant Principal, Activities Director and PE teacher (1988-1991). From 1984 to 1991, Rick was a Head Varsity Football Coach, Head Varsity

Basketball Coach, Head Varsity Track Coach, Assistant Varsity Football Coach, Assistant Varsity Basketball Coach and Assistant Varsity Track Coach.

Mr. Lester came to Tecumseh Public Schools in 1991 to serve as the 7-12 Principal and the Activities Director (1991-2007). When Tecumseh and Nemaha Valley merged in 2007, he became the High School Principal. Rick was the high school principal at JCC for the remainder of his career (2007-2025).

Lisa Schuster 1999-2000 to 2024-2025





Mrs. Lisa Schuster began her teaching career at ESU7 in Columbus, NE in the fall of 1988. She served as the Itinerant Resource Teacher, Center Based Teacher and in Testing. While at ESU7 she drove to the one (1) to three (3) room school houses in Boone, Butler, Colfax, Nance, Platte and Polk Counties to provide services. She then served as Resource Teacher at Lindsay Holy Family's Junior and Senior High Schools while still providing resources to some of the small

rural schools. Lisa then took on a role with Schuyler Public Schools as a Center Based Multi-Handicapped Program Teacher; all the while driving between Lindsay and Schuyler. She then took a full-time position at Schuyler as a Special Education/English Teacher as well as being in charge of their Special Olympics. In 1995, Mrs. Schuster went to Beatrice Public Schools where she taught in both the high school and elementary, was the sponsor of SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) and helped with the Special Olympics.

Mrs. Schuster came to Tecumseh Public Schools in 1999 as a Special Education Teacher. When the merge of Tecumseh and Nemaha Valley was completed, she took her place as a High School Special Education Teacher until her retirement. While at JCC, Lisa served on many committees as well as coaching Special Olympics (Track, Basketball, Bowling), Junior High Volleyball, Junior High Basketball, Cheerleading, Unified Bowling, and Bowling.

Robin Heidemann

2006- 2007 to 2024-2025





Mrs. Heidemann has been with the JCC/Tecumseh School Districts for 19 years. Prior to Tecumseh, Robin taught at Elk Creek Elementary School. She has been in education for 31 years total.

Lisa Kuhl 1996-1997 to 2024-2025





Mrs. Lisa Kuhl is a 1984 graduate of Nemaha Valley Public Schools. She started her career as a Nurses Assistant at Nebraska City Manor Nursing Home. Lisa went on to get her nursing degree from Bryan Memorial Hospital School of Nursing, graduating in 1988. While in college, she worked at Bryan as a Technical Assistant, choosing to work on the Pediatrics or Obstetrical Nursing Floors. In June 1988, Lisa began work at CHI-Saint Elizabeth's in Lincoln as a labor and delivery nurse.

Mrs. Kuhl was hired in November of 1996 by Mr. Tom Rother. She worked as the district's full-time school nurse while also continuing her work at CHI-Saint Elizabeth's. Lisa continued this dual work for 11 years! After the Tecumseh/Nemaha Valley districts merged, she continued to work as the JCC District Nurse. During this time, Lisa helped launch the CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant) Program in 2011; assisting students to successfully obtain their CNA license and start work in the field. As an avid supporter of her students, Mrs. Kuhl regularly assists by keeping books for Volleyball and Basketball.

Diane Wilken 2014-2015 to 2024-2025





Mrs. Wilken started as a sub for Kitchen and Para in Cook in 2014. She then became a full time Para educator in January 2015 for ELL (English Language Learners). In August 2016, Diane became the Middle School Health Room Aide, Preschool/4-5 Grade Secretary and also route and Preschool van driver.

Kim Jansen 2015-2016 to 2024-2025





Mrs. Jansen taught 4th grade for 2 years in Omaha. In 2001, she moved to Tecumseh and was a substitute teacher at Cook and Tecumseh for 15 years. For the last 10 years, Kim has been a paraprofessional at JCC.

Congratulations to JCC's K-3 March Thunderbirds of the Month!



K - Charley Beethe, Charlie Dickson, Noah Veras, Vanessa Sterup, Graham Gist. Not Pictured: Arianna Jimenez

1st - Brock Schultz, Beckett Gist, Robin Jaquez, Luna Herrle, Gracelynn Pool, Blakely Kuhl, David Shirley, Hazel Whited, Caleb Griess





2nd - Addy McCoppin, Jaxson Stafford-Laflin, Penny Barnes, Victoria Chavez-Acosta, Carsyn Gregory. Not Pictured: Kendrick Reyes

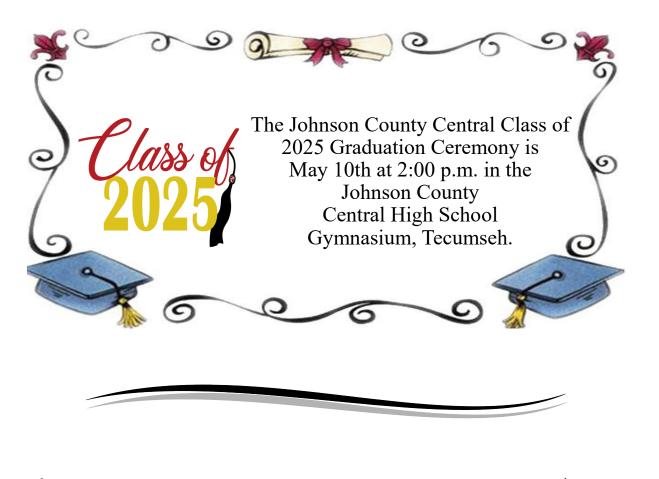
3rd - Charlie Brandt, Leonidas King,Casin Gottula, Dawson Beethe, Ruger Clifton,Conor Mecham, Dominic Black.Not Pictured: Tucker Helmick, Karla Prado



*Thank you Tecumseh Pizza Hut and Tecumseh Dairy Queen for supplying gift coupons for our Thunderbirds!

2025-2026 School Calendar

January	Sa 31 17 17 7 7 24 24 24 24 24 24 24 24 24 24 24 24 24	Sa 2 Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students. 7 13 End 3rd Quarter 10 21 Student Days = 18 Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students. 11 Student Days = 18 Teacher Days = 20 Total 3rd Qtr. Student Days = 45 Total 3rd Qtr. Teacher Days = 45 April April April April 4 13 Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students. 5 11 20 NO SCHOOL for students - District Music 7 18 Student Days = 17 1 25 Student Days = 19 1 26 NO SCHOOL for students - District Music	Sa 30 30 27 27 27 27 27 27 27 27 27 27 27 27 27
January 2026	Su M Tu W Th F 4 5 6 7 8 9 11 12 13 14 15 16 18 19 20 21 22 23 25 26 27 28 29 30 25 26 27 28 29 30 Su M Tu W F 1 2 3 4 5 6 8 9 10 11 12 13 15 16 17 18 19 20 22 23 24 25 26 27	March 2026 Su M Tu W Th F 1 2 3 4 5 6 8 9 10 11 12 13 15 16 17 18 19 20 22 23 24 25 26 27 29 30 31 April 2026 Su M Tu W Th F 5 6 7 8 9 10 12 13 14 15 16 17 19 20 21 22 23 24 26 27 28 29 30	Su M Tu W Th F 3 4 5 6 7 8 10 11 12 13 14 15 17 18 19 20 21 22 24 25 26 27 28 29 31
July	 4 Independence day August 6-8 Teacher In-Service 11 NSAA Official Start of Fall Practice 11 First Day For Students - 1:00 PM Dismissal 15 Teacher In-Service 19 First Day For Preschool 25 Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students. Student Days = 12, Teacher Days = 17 	September 1 Labor Day - NO SCHOOL 8 Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students. 22 Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students. Student Days = 17 Teacher Days = 19 October 6 NO SCHOOL Parent-Teacher Conferences 11 AM - 7 PM 10 End 1st Quarter 20 Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students. Student Days = 21 Total 1st Qtr. Student Days = 36 Total 1st Qtr. Teacher Days = 44 November	3 Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students. 17 Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students. 26-28 NO SCHOOL - Thanksgiving Break Student Days = 14 Teacher Days = 16 December 1 Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students. 19 NO SCHOOL for students/End 2nd Quarter/1st Sem. 19 Teacher Work-Day/JCC Wrestling Invite 22-31 NO SCHOOL - Winter Break 24-28 NSAA Winter Moratorium Student Days = 12 Teacher Days = 14
July 2025	Su M Tu W Th F Sa 6 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 2 3 4 5 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 7 1 2 2 1 1 1 2 2 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	September 2025 Su M Tu W Th F Sa 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 Cotober 2025 Su M Tu W Th F Sa 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 26 27 28 29 30 31	Su M Tu W Th F Sa 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30





Music Calendar



Music Calendar for the remainder of the year:

May	Apr 30, May 2	Wed & Fri	Spring Play - Wed @ 2:00, Fri @ 7:00
	4	Sun	Musical - Sun @ 2:00
	8	Thurs	HS Spring Concert and Art Show @ 7:00 pm - Auditorium
	10	Saturday	HS Band at Graduation
	12	Monday	ECNC Honor Band - Elmwood Murdock
	14	Wednesday	Band Recruitment Day
		Monday	4-8 Spring Concert - Cook @ 7:00pm
		K-3 Spring Program - HS GYM @ 7:00 pm	



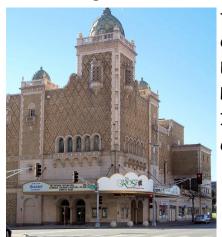




First Grade News!!!

With the support of the Nebraska Arts Council and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment organizations, we are excited to tell you that we received a <u>School Bus for the Arts</u> grant from these organizations to support our visit to The Rose Theater in Omaha, Nebraska, on Friday, May 2, 2025. We will be watching the performance of <u>Pete the Cat</u>. We will be practicing our active listening skills and theater etiquette as we observe the elements of the theater - posture, movement, facial expressions, gestures, vocals, costumes and makeup, props and scenery. This is a fabulous opportunity for our students to see a book that they've heard in the classroom come alive with the performance of this story.

We are thrilled with this opportunity to attend this performance. We are so thankful to the Nebraska Arts Council. It is a state agency that provides numerous grants, services and special initiatives that help sustain and promote



the arts throughout Nebraska. The Nebraska Arts
Council is supported by the Nebraska Cultural
Endowment, Kimmel Charitable Foundation, Nebraska
Legislature, and National Endowment for the Arts.
If you'd like to learn more about the Nebraska Arts
Council you can visit: artscouncil.nebraska.gov.

Greetings Thunderbird Family!

You can start to see the light at the end of the tunnel for the school year and things are quickly winding down. It has been a year full of challenges and adversity for our athletes and coaches and they should be acknowledged for a job well done! Everyone should be proud of what they have accomplished!

We have a busy month of May ahead of us with some more home events where you can come out and support your Thunderbirds. They include:

May 1: Junior High Track Thunderbird Invite

May 3: High School ECNC Track Meet

May 5: Athletic Banquet

May 8: High School JCC Boys Golf Invite @

Tecumseh Country Club

May 9: High School Track JCC Invite

May 15: District Track

May 16: K-6 Track & Field Day

As we head into summer, keep an eye out for summer schedules and information such as weight room hours and specific-sport open gyms and camps. It is extremely important that our athletes take advantage of these opportunities to hone their skills. Please encourage them to attend. We will do our best to get these advertised on the school website and our social media pages.

Thank you and have a great summer!

Garrett Collin Activities Director



NEWS FROM PRINCIPAL RICK LESTER

Summer vacation is sneaking upon us! For our JCC students, summer means conditioning and working on their preferred sport skills for the upcoming year. Summer is also the time for JCC student's to take advantage of Driver's Education. There was a meeting held for high school students and middle school students who were interested in Driver's Education. All interested students received an informational sheet which explains the qualification for students who want to take Driver's Education. Driver's Education classes will be held from Monday, June 2, 2025 thru Thursday, June 5, 2025 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. with a thirty-minute lunch break. Classes will be held at the high school in room 200. We have a maximum of 28 JCC students who can take the Driver's Education class. With this in mind the first 28 JCC students who pay the cost of the class (\$250.00) will be admitted to the summer Driver's Education class.

In February and March all students pre-registered for the 2025-2026 school year. Once the official class schedule is complete, every student will receive a letter around the first of August which will include their schedule showing their classes and periods.

Another item that needs to be addressed is our summer school. Summer school is designed for students for credit recovery. Summer school begins Monday, June 2, 2025 and ends on Thursday, June 26, 2025. Classes are from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday. Summer school is administered through a software program called OdysseyWare. Each student will be working independently on the computer. Mr. Hedger and Mr. Hawley will be monitoring and assisting the class, and be available for questions and help. Each class has a required number of assignments each day (approx. 10-13 assignments) that need to be completed with a passing grade. All required assignments need to be completed by 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 26, 2025.

All parents of students who lost credits in the first semester or who are in jeopardy of losing credits for the second semester, were sent a letter on April 14, 2025 explaining this opportunity. I will meet with these students to encourage them to take summer school and the importance of utilizing this program. Summer school needs to be registered and fees paid for before the first day of class on Monday, June 2, 2025. Students may only take summer school to recover 1st or 2nd semester of a class and the fee is \$50.00 per semester of a class.



May 2025

Johnson County Central Lunch Menu

Sat	3		17	24	
Fri	2 Meatball Sub Potato Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk	9 Pizza Hot Veggie Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk	16 Cheeseburger/WG Bun Potato Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk	23 NO SCHOOL TEACHER IN-SERVICE	Summe
Thu	1 Hot Ham/Cheese Baked Beans Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk	8 Chicken Patty/WG Bun Potato Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk	15 NO SCHOOL District Track Meet @ JCC	22 LAST DAY OF SCHOOL Early Dismissal–11:00 a.m.	
Wed	e y Provider"	7 Chef's Choice Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk	14 Shredded Pork/WG Bun Ribette/WG Bun–MS Potato Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk	21 Fiestada Hot Veggies Ice Cream Cup Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk	28
Tue	Menu Is Subject to Change Without Notice "This Institution Is An Equal Opportunity Provider"	6 Chicken Quesadilla Black Bean Salsa Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk	13 Cream Chicken over Biscuit Hot Veggies Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk	20 Hotdog/WG Bun Potato Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk	27
Mon		S NO SCHOOL	12 Comdog Hot Veggies Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk	19 Crispito Refried Beans Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk	26
Sun		4	Happy	18	25

May 2025

JCC Activities Calendar

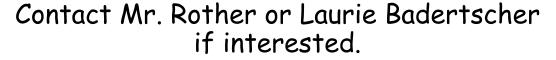
Sat	Y Track ECNC Meet at JCC HS-10:00 am C	JCC HS Graduation @ JCC HS-2:00 pm	9	24 V Track State Meet @ Omaha Burke	31
Fri	2 Ist Grade to Attend Rose Theater "Pete the Cat" - 8:00 am JAG Tour of OCC & Youth OCC with Warden-Omaha-8:00 am Golden Readers Competition @ Peru State College-9:00 am JCC Spring Play @ JCC Elementary Auditorium-7:00 pm	9 2nd Grade Field Trip to Keiwit Luminarium, Omaha 3rd Grade Field Trip to Henry Doorly Zoo V Track Invite @ JCC HS- 10:00 am JH Track ECNC Invite @ Palmyra HS-10:00 am	16 K6 Grade Track & Field Day @ JCC HS - 1:00 pm	Teacher In-Service V Track State Meet @ Omaha Burke	30
Thu	1 H Track Invite @ JCC HS— 10:00 am HS Honors Day @ JCC HS Gym—2:30 pm	8 V Boys Golf Invite @ Tecumseh CC—9:00 am HS Spring Choir/Band Concert & Art Shou—7:00 pm	NO SCHOOL V District Track Meet @ JCC HS -10:00 am	LAST DAY OF SCHOOL Early Dismissal— 11:00 am	29 V Boys Golf State Meet–TBD
Wed		7 Graduation Rehearsal & Senior Lunch–10:00 am PreSchool Track & Field Day– 2:30 pm 8th Grade Orientation @ JCC HS–3:15 pm	14 Band Recruitment Day @ JCC MS Cook Site-9:30 am JCC School Board Meeting @ JCC HS Computer Lab- 6:00 pm	1st Grade Field Trip to Henry Doorly Zoo–9:00 am 4th & 5th Grade Honors Program @ JCC MS Cook Site – 1:00 pm MS 6-8th Grade Honors Program @ JCC MS Cook Site-2:30 pm PreK Graduation @ Elementary Auditorium—6:30 pm	28 V Boys Golf State Meet–TBD
Tue	ALL ACTIVITIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE	6 V Track Invite @ Freeman HS— 9:00 am V Boss Golf Meet @ Grandpas Woods—10:00 am	13 8th Grade Science Fair Presentations @ JCC MS Cook Site-9:00 am JH Track Relays @ Auburn HS- 4:00 pm	20 6th Grade Field Trip to Henry Doorly Zoo–9:00 am K3 Spring Program @ JCC HS Gym–7:00 pm	27 Y ED
Mon	ALL ACTIVI TO	5 NO SCHOOL JH Track Invite @ Tri-County HS_10:00 am Athletic Banquet @ JCC HS_ 6:00pm	12 V Boys Golf Invite @ Hidden Valley CC—8:00 am ECNC Honor Band @ Elmwood- Murdock—9:00 am	V Boys Golf District Meet–TBD 4-8 Grade MS Spring Concert @ JCC MS–Cook Site–7:00 pm	26 27 27 27 27 28 29 29 29 29 29 29 29
Sun		4 JCC Spring Play Matinee @ JCC Elementary Auditorium-2:00 pm	Happy Hochers & Day	18	25

Bus Drivers Wanted!



JCC is seeking route, shuttle and activity drivers for the current school year and upcoming 2025-2026 school year.

\$36 per route \$36 per shuttle \$25 per hour for activities



402-335-3320

Johnson County Central is an equal-opportunity employer.

Johnson County Central Public Schools

PO Box 338 PO Box 255 Tecumseh, NE 68450 Cook, NE 68329

Phone: 402 335-3320 Superintendent @ Tecumseh

402 335-3328 Principal @ Tecumseh 402 864-4171 Principal @ Cook 402 864-4181 MS Office @ Cook Web Site www.jccentral.org

This newsletter is produced monthly to inform parents, district patrons and others about school events, classroom events, and student achievements in the classroom and extra curricular activities. This information is submitted by faculty and staff members. Information may be submitted to offices at Tecumseh and Cook.

The school reserves the right to edit information in the interest of space and content.

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION US Postage Paid Permit No. 3 Cook, NE 68329 ECRWS

POSTAL PATRON

Non-Discrimination

It shall be the policy of Johnson County Central Public Schools to not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, handicap, or age in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for discrimination concerns. Inquiries concerning any of the above, or Title IX and Rehabilitation Act Regulations (504) should be directed to the Superintendent of Schools, 358 N 6th Street, Tecumseh, NE 68329; (402)335-3320.

Child find

Children that are birth to 5 years old who are experiencing problems with speech language, cognitive, emotional and/or physical development or have a disability can receive services through Early Childhood Education Services. If interested or in need of more information please contact Rebecca Kling, Special Education Coordinator or Jon Rother, Superintendent at 402-335-3320.

SCHOOL IN SESSION
Monday, May 12th
Monday, May 19th
NO SCHOOL
Monday, May 5th
Thursday, May 15th

(District Track @ JCC HS)

Last Day for PK3 year olds—May 14th

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL—MAY 22

(EARLY DISMISSAL @ 11:00 A.M.)