

Students are already in their fourth week of the final quarter of the 2017-2018 school year. That means that six more weeks of school remain, and students are officially taking part in “testing season.” The new State test is in full swing, and students and staff are working towards a common goal.

Next Friday is an exciting day for the district and community. On April 13<sup>th</sup>, high school students will be engaging in various volunteer activities throughout the community. We started our annual community cleanup day last year, and it was a huge success. Students greatly enjoy helping throughout the community and taking part in tasks that help make the community a better place. Students also learn to appreciate what they have and also learn to be positive members of the community. It also provides an opportunity to thank the community for the tremendous support that is shown to the school. This year, there will be an added element to the cleanup day with the Merrick County Farm Bureau providing fresh Nebraska hamburgers to students as they promote the Beef In Schools program. We greatly appreciate their support of this program, and we are excited to see locally raised beef in our cafeteria.

In other agricultural news, the district greenhouse has officially received occupancy, and plants began being moved into the facility last week. The greenhouse will be utilized by the FFA, agriculture classes, and science classes. We hope to keep the greenhouse open year-round. We are also developing an outside garden behind the greenhouse to create additional opportunities. This is an agriculture-based community, and we are excited to finally have a greenhouse to support students in the agriculture and agriculture science fields. The greenhouse became a reality through several contributors, along with district funds, and the oversight of Bill Stuart. In addition, we cannot thank Mr. Shrader and his construction students enough for their work in helping to construct the greenhouse. They received a hands-on learning opportunity while learning what it feels like to do construction in Nebraska during the winter months.

Last week, I sent out a message to our student body thanking them for their efforts in the classroom, in their activities, and with their involvement in the community. As adults, we often forget to thank those individuals that we are educating. Our students do a great job! They demonstrate an incredible amount of dedication to being well-rounded students that take advantage of a tremendous number of student opportunities. Society is changing, and as adults we often become concerned about the future. I can ensure this community that we have a lot of GREAT kids that are doing the right thing and are developing skills that will make them productive adults. The world is full of unknowns, but I have a lot of faith in the students of this district.

Watching our students perform on stage last week in their annual musical should remind all of us of the many aspects that exist within a school setting. Every student deserves to be a part of something they really enjoy and are passionate about. When you look at the performances of our students in the classroom, in the

laboratory, on stage, on the field, in the gym, or the many other avenues, it demonstrates just how much time some of our students dedicate to their craft, whatever it may be. Our students are lucky to have the opportunity to be a part of a considerable number of opportunities. We are always looking for creative ways to continue to expand those opportunities so that every student's dreams are fulfilled. Go Bison!!!