

# Callaway Public Schools

"Creating Positive Stories"

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November 25, 2025

## Superintendent's Corner

Happy holidays CPS family! We have a lot to celebrate this year. In this month's corner I get to share our most recent AQUESTT ratings. The State Department of Education compiles data on each public school district in the state and releases the information as a ranking. The ranks range from Excellent, Great, Good, and Needs Help to Improve. The numbers are not set, but approximately 8% of districts in the state will rank in the needs help to improve category, 30% will have a ranking of good, 32% get the ranking of great, and the remaining 29% of schools are ranked as excellent.

I realize that as soon as I start putting some numbers down some of you have probably stopped reading, but there is more... Each school in your district gets its own score. So we have an elementary score, a middle school score, and a high school score. These scores are determined by your students' performance on the state sanctioned test. For juniors, this is the ACT test and for 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade the test is called the NSCAS test. Along with your test scores, the ranking can be moved up with improved attendance by all students and improved scores compared to the previous year's tests.

Drum roll.....

For the 2024-25 school year our rankings were as follows. Elementary school Excellent, our middle school ranked Great, our high school scored an Excellent, and the district score overall is EXCELLENT! Each of our school and our district are up from last year's mark, except the elementary school which was excellent last year as well.

As an administration, we are very proud of the efforts of our teachers and our students. Data always creates a story and as administrators we try to decipher the data to come up with the why? And how? The first ingredient in our recipe of success is great kids. We are blessed to work with kids whose families believe that education is important. Two other factors from our students made a big difference in our scores: effort and attendance. Our attendance marks last school year were the highest they have been since 2020. Last year we also set an improvement goal on our test scores that if we met the mark we would let school out a couple days early. This served as motivation for our students to give their best effort on the tests. With this small motivation our students blew their scores out of the water, almost doubling the improvement goal.

Test scores are not the end all be all that defines us as a school but it is a very important indicator. No one has ever been given a great job or a happy family as the result of a test score, but the intangible qualities that lead to high scores like hard work and consistency definitely have an impact on your greater life goals.

So congratulations to students, parents, teachers, and principals! We are setting a high bar, but we are excited to try and beat it!



# DECEMBER

## Bobcats of the Month

### Gideon Stutzman

**Gideon is a worker! He listens in class and gets busy when it's time to do independent work. He has a positive attitude and enjoys school and his classmates. Well done!**

**Mrs. Rush**

### Tyra Brestel

**She is always so positive and brings such good energy to our school! - Mrs. Weber**

### Kaygan Witthuhn

**Kaygan is a very responsible student that gives her best effort every day in the classroom. She does not complain and is very proactive in her approach to the classroom. I appreciate her efforts. -**

**Mr. Ellis**





# Merry Christmas!

Hello Callaway!

We have made it to the final stretch of the first semester! Crazy to think that the school year is already halfway over. There is no greater feeling than being done with schoolwork and spending time with loved ones for 2 weeks. We are almost there! With break nearing, there is also the greater chance for snow and cold temperatures. Make sure to bundle up for your trip to and from school.

Cookie baking will be taking place this month if you bought cookies and other goodies from the FCCLA members. There is also a Speech meet in Cozad to start off the season early. Winter sports are in full swing and academics are piling up. Good luck out there, Bears, and stay warm!

-The Broadcasting and Journalism Team



## December 2025 At a Glance

Monday December - 1 - 6:30 PM Play Production Practice

Tuesday December - 2 - FCCLA Officer Meeting at Lunch

1 PM JH Wrestling @ Dunning

6:30PM Play Production Practice

Wednesday December - 3 - All Day District Play Production @ Thedford

Thursday December - 4 - FCCLA Officer Meeting at Lunch

Friday December - 5 - 8AM Bear Bank

10 AM Wrestling @ Elwood Vs. Hi-Line

4 PM Basketball @ Callaway Vs. Twin Loup

Saturday December - 6 - 1PM Basketball @ Amherst

Monday December - 8 - All Day Book Fair

8 AM FFA District LDEs @ Ansley

1 PM JH Wrestling @ Merna

Tuesday December - 9 - Book Fair

7 PM 7-12 Holiday Concert

Wednesday December - 10 - Book Fair

State Play Production in Norfolk

2 PM Teammates Cookie Decorating

Thursday December - 11 - Book Fair

6 PM Pre K - 6th Holiday Concert

Friday December - 12 - Book Fair

10 AM Wrestling @ Sargent

5 PM Basketball @ Cambridge

Saturday December - 13 - 9 AM FCCLA Baking

10 AM Wrestling @ Merna Vs. Anselmo-Merna

2 PM Basketball @ Callaway Vs. Pleasanton

Tuesday December - 16 - 4:30 PM Girls Basketball @ SEM

Wednesday December - 17 - 1:30 PM Dismissal

Thursday December - 18 - 5 PM Wrestling Quad @ Ansley

Friday December - 19 - End of Quarter 2

8 AM Bear Bank

1 PM Wrestling @ Southern Valley

4 Pm Basketball @ Arnold Vs. Medicine Valley

Monday December - 22 - No School

Basketball @ Maxwell Tournament

Tuesday December - 23 - No School

Basketball @ Maxwell Tournament

No School December 24 - Wednesday December 31

Mon. 1 B - Cinni Minni L - Pizza Sticks	Tues. 2 B - Breakfast Pizza L - Chinese	Wed. 3 B - Pancakes L - Spaghetti	Thurs. 4 B - Breakfast Bars L - Hamburger Potato Casserole	Fri. 5 B - Grab and Go L - Tacos
8 B - Sausage & Tri- Taters L - Chicken Strips	9 B Pancake Sandwiches L - Pigs in a Blanket	10 B - Long Johns L - Square Pan Pizza	11 B - Biscuits & Gravy L - Chicken Alfredo	12 B - Grab & Go L - Walking Tacos
15 B - Tornados L - Chili or Plain Hot Dog	16 B - Waffles L - Popcorn Chicken Bowls	17 B - Grab & Go L - Tater Tot Casserole	18 B - Breakfast Burrito L - Tortellini	19 B - Grab & Go L - Hamburgers

Breakfast Includes: Milk, Juice,

Extra Milk: \$.45

Breakfast: \$2.50

Breakfast & Lunch Menu

OR Fruit and main Breakfast

Seconds: \$.80

Lunch: \$2.95

Lunch Includes: Veggies/Fruit

Item Breakfast will not be

Extra Juice: \$.40

7-12: \$3.10

Bar and Milk

served on 10:00am Starts

Adults: \$4.25

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# DECEMBER



# Helping Students Learn<sup>®</sup>

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School

Title I-Educational Service Unit 10

MIDDLE SCHOOL



December 2025

## Foster the leadership qualities that boost middle school success

Many people think of a leader as a boss: someone who tells others what to do. But true leadership has just as much to do with listening, learning, planning and setting an example. Leadership qualities help students develop problem-solving and communication skills and responsibility.

All children have the ability to become leaders. To foster leadership, encourage your child to be:

- **Organized.** Leaders plan ahead. They know that leaving projects to the last minute usually produces poor results.
- **Open to new ideas.** Leaders know they don't know everything. They listen and consider input from others.
- **Flexible.** Leaders don't get stuck in the rut of doing everything the same way every time. They are willing to negotiate and try new solutions.
- **Caring.** Effective leaders want to make things better for everyone.
- **Optimistic.** Leaders are enthusiastic and expect things to go right. They trust the people they work with.
- **Resilient.** Leaders know how to handle losses and move forward when things don't go as planned.



Source: B.A. Lewis, "What Do You Stand For? For Teens: A Guide to Building Character, Free Spirit Publishing.



## Speak out against substance abuse

Substance abuse early in life increases the risk of addiction and damage to brain function—and it can be fatal the first time. The middle school years are a time when giving your child prevention messages is critically important.

People are more likely to turn to drugs and alcohol in times of transition, like middle school. Kids this age also want to try new experiences. Since their judgment and decision-making skills are immature, they may not recognize the risks.

To set your child straight:

- **Ask, "What have you learned in school about substance abuse?"** Reinforce those messages.

- **Discuss the dangers** of using prescription drugs improperly.
- **Set clear rules:** No use of any drug, including alcohol, cannabis and nicotine products, except as prescribed by a doctor for your child or approved by you.
- **Build a strong relationship.** Enjoy time and activities together.

Source: "Preventing Drug Abuse: The Best Strategy," National Institute on Drug Abuse.

## Level up reading suggestions

Your child is growing up and learning more about how the world works. To encourage frequent reading, acknowledge this growth. Suggest that your child read:



- **News articles.** Share an article on an interesting current event every day. Ask your student to share one with you, too.
- **Books about people** your child's age who are making a difference. Middle schoolers are figuring out their place in the world and how they can contribute.

## Promote accountability

To help your student learn to face up to problems and take responsibility for actions:

- **Let your child** be the one to talk to the teacher first about issues with grades.
- **Ask questions** to help your child think about potential results of actions before taking them.
- **Let your child experience** and learn from consequences.

## Four study tips get results

Research points to four study strategies that improve learning and memory. Encourage your child to:

1. **Study the same** material in multiple locations.
2. **Alternate** studying different types of content in a single study session.
3. **Space out study sessions** over several days, rather than cramming.
4. **Practice recalling** learned information—by summarizing, self-testing, etc.



Source: M. Imundo and others, "Where and how to learn: The interactive benefits of contextual variation, restudying and retrieval practice for learning," *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, Sage.





## How can I tell if moodiness is really depression?

**Q:** My middle schooler has been unhappy and negative lately. Is this normal at this age, or could my child be truly depressed?

**A:** Hormonal changes in the middle school years can swing children's moods up and down from one minute to the next. However, poor mental health among adolescents is widespread, so you are wise to be concerned.



Depression typically lasts longer than a mood swing. Your child might be depressed if one or more of these signs persist for at least a few weeks:

- **Sadness, agitation,** anger or irritability.
- **Feelings of hopelessness,** worthlessness or guilt.
- **Loss of interest** in previously enjoyed activities.
- **Sleeping or eating** too much or too little.
- **Difficulty concentrating.**
- **Frequent headaches** or stomachaches.

The risk is higher for children who have a family history of depression, or who are under stress, have a learning disorder or are experiencing a loss. If you suspect depression, seek professional help immediately from a doctor or school counselor.



## Are you teaching time management?

Middle schoolers have assignments in multiple classes. So they need sharp time management skills to complete everything on time. Are you helping your child develop these skills? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below:

1. **Do you have** your child write all academic and social commitments on a calendar?
2. **Do you ask** questions to help your child prioritize tasks? *What's due soonest? What will take the most time to complete?*
3. **Do you model** wise timing decisions? *I'm going to get started now. Waiting until the last minute is so stressful.*
4. **Do you help** your child break big projects down into manageable steps?

5. **Do you have** your child create a weekly schedule of times for completing tasks?

### How well are you doing?

*More yes answers mean you are instilling effective habits for using time wisely. For each no, try that idea.*

*"A plan is what; a schedule is when. It takes both a plan and a schedule to get things done."*

—Peter Turla

## Encourage language study

Research shows that when students study a foreign language, their brains physically change in ways that enhance learning. Language learning benefits your child's:

- **Memory.** The need to learn and recall new vocabulary gives the brain a workout that strengthens connections.
- **Understanding** of how language works. This aids reading, writing and test-taking.
- **Problem-solving skills.** Studies show that students who speak more than one language do better in math and science.

Mastering the challenge of learning a new language also provides a confidence boost that helps when tackling other subjects.

Source: H. Mohamed, "How speaking multiple languages changes your brain," DW.com.

## Serve nutrition knowledge

A nutritious diet helps your child stay alert in class and retain information. To reinforce the need to make healthy food choices:

- **Plan meals** with your child. Set a goal to try one new healthy food each week.
- **Read food labels** together. Does that bag of chips contain more than one serving? Have your child calculate the fat and salt content in the whole bag.



## Explore tutoring options

Students who consistently struggle in school may benefit from one-on-one tutoring. Ask your child's counselor about tutoring resources at school and in the community.

When working with a tutor, set realistic, short-term goals together so you can tell if the tutoring is working. Then, let the tutor take charge. If your child isn't making progress after several months, it may be time to try something or someone else.

### Helping Students Learn®

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