

December 19, 2025

Superintendent's Corner

Happy New Year! It is the time of year when we set new goals, new resolutions, and new energy. According to my AI generated research a New Year's resolution usually lasts about 3 months. I really thought it would be shorter than that even. I believe the 2nd Friday in January is often referred to as "quitter Friday." I am a big believer in goal setting and the positive impact it can have on me personally and upon the people I am with every day, so in this month's superintendent's corner I want to give a little of my own personal advice on how to set worthy goals and how to attempt to make it past *quitter's Friday*. I promise this comes from my own life experience and not my Gemini tool.

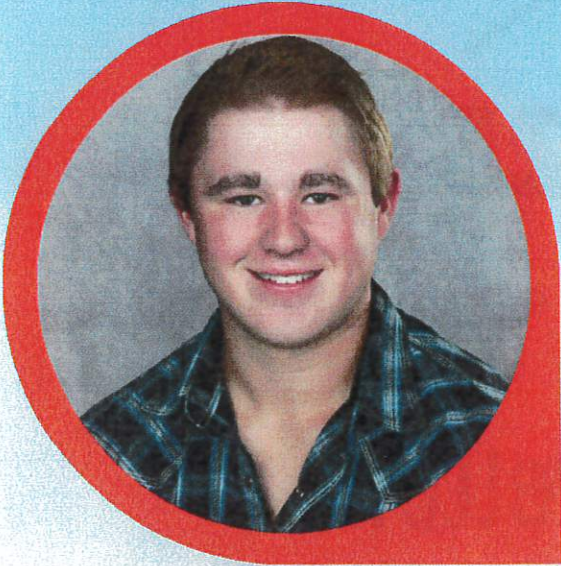
I think the first problem we face is the old how do you eat an elephant issue. When you set your goal don't make it something that your soul already tells you is impossible. Not that you can't accomplish the impossible, but it happens "one bite at a time." You have to be able to break the big problem down into smaller problems. An example, if I want my classes reading scores to improve for the spring NSCAS test I find smaller goals that I can accomplish along the way. Like, we are going to plan 10 extra minutes for kids to read each school day. Small goals stacked on top of each other will get you to the big goal. If I want to hit a certain number on the scale I don't just say I want to lose x-amount of pounds. Things like, I am going to stop getting calories from gas stations or I am going to stop eating in front of the tv are easier to track and will help with the bigger goal. Small goals will always lead to the big one. So as a school when we meet to talk about our big goals our plan is always to identify the small steps that lead us to where we want to be.

The next problem I see is that we sometimes don't focus goals on the actions we focus them on the result. If my New Year's resolution is to have all of my credit cards paid off by next Christmas my chance of success is very low. But if my goal is to put x-more dollars toward card A and then when card A is paid off in March I will add that payment to card B until it is also cleaned up. I may be wanting to accomplish a goal that is 12 months away, but I am making a plan based on small goals that I can accomplish and measure along the way. In the school setting we have some long range goals for our facility. If the board has a shared vision of what our school is going to look like in 5 years we have to create a plan and a path that will get us there. *The journey of a 1000 miles begins with just one step ~ Lao Tzu*

On to the next complication with goal achievement. You can very seldom achieve your goal in a vacuum. People by their nature rely on those close to them for support and accountability. If my goal is to walk 2 miles every day and I roll out of bed and the wind is blowing 70 miles an hour the likelihood that I lace them up that day is really low, but if I know my walking partner is waiting for me out there I feel obligated. Some of the best motivation is the desire to not disappoint those who are closest to us. In the school setting we never want to set a goal that boils down to one person's effort and we want to make sure that the credit for our accomplishments can be shared by all. Case in point: why would the PE teacher think that our kids raising their AQUESTT rating has anything do to with his efforts. Well, let me tell you... Kids who lift weights generate endorphins that give them sustained energy (way better than an energy drink). Kids who work out are less likely to be sick and attendance is the key factor academic success. Kids that are in good physical condition are generally happier and more

JANUARY

Bobcats of the Month



Devyn Denney

Devyn has been a huge help in my theater arts class. He built multiple parts of our set on his own. He has also assisted us in moving props to new locations. He's always willing to help. He is reliable and always easy to work

with!

Mrs. Campbell



Neltje Reiff

Neltje has been willing to step up and help in any way she has been asked this year, even if it wasn't necessarily her "job". She has maintained a great, positive attitude as well.

- Mrs. Sughayar



Natalie Trotter

Even in the face of adversity with her epilepsy, she never fails to be in a good mood and always willing to do her best in everything. She has so much perseverance and has had a great attitude despite the hand that she has been dealt. - Mrs. Espinosa

January 2026 at a Glance

Thursday January 1 - No School

Friday January 2 - No School

Monday January 5 - No School - Teacher In-Service

Tuesday January 6 - FCCLA Officer Meeting @ Lunch

4 PM Basketball @ Callaway Vs. Hershey

5:30 PM Wrestling @ Dunning Vs. AM/ Sandhills-Thedford

Thursday January 8 - FCCLA Chapter Meeting @ Lunch

4 PM Basketball @ Thedford Vs. Sandhills/Thedford

Friday January 9 - 10 AM Wrestling @ Burwell

Saturday January 10 - Mini Cheerleader Performance @ Game

9AM Mini Bobcat Cheer Camp

2PM Basketball @ Callaway Vs. Bertrand

Wednesday January 14 - 8 AM Lions Club Screenings

Friday January 16 - Mini Cheerleaders Performance @ Game

8AM Bear Bank

10AM Wrestling @ SEM

4PM Basketball @ Arnold Vs. Maxwell

Saturday January 17 - All Day Sing Around Nebraska @ North Platte

10 AM MNAC Wrestling @ Dunning

2 PM Basketball @ Brady

Monday January 19 - All Day Underclassman Honor Band @ Kearney

1 PM JH Basketball @ Callaway Vs AL

Tuesday January 20 - 3:30 PM Basketball @ Arcadia/ Loup City

Wednesday January 21 - 1:30PM Dismissal

Thursday January 22 - No School Teacher In-Service

8AM FCCIA District Star @ Callaway

4:30PM Basketball @ Ansley Vs. Ansley-Litchfield

Friday January 23 - No School - South Loup Wrestling Meet 10 AM

Monday January 26 - 8AM Back up Day for FCCLA District Star @
Callaway

Wednesday January 28 - 1PM JH Basketball @ Arnold Vs. Brady

Friday January 30 - 8AM Bear Bank

10AM Wrestling @ Greeley

Helping Students Learn[®]

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School

Title I-Educational Service Unit 10



January 2026

Empower your child to go into tests confident and prepared

Thumping hearts, sweaty palms and worry are a just few of the physical and emotional symptoms many middle schoolers feel before a test. But when students know they are prepared for tests, they tend to be less nervous about them.

To help relieve test anxiety, offer reassurance that you will always be satisfied by your student's best effort. Then, encourage your child to use these preparation strategies:

- **Ask the teacher** what the test will cover if your student is unsure. Few things are scarier than the unknown.
- **Start studying well in advance.** Help your child schedule several short study sessions in the days leading up to the test. Then if something is confusing, there will be time for your child to get help before the test.
- **Take a self-test.** Recalling and applying knowledge reinforces it in your child's memory. If there are questions or sample problems in the book for the class, your child can answer them. Or, you can help your child create a practice test based on class notes.
- **Practice relaxation techniques,** such as deep breathing. Your child can also visualize being able to answer questions easily after studying.
- **Make healthy choices.** Regularly getting enough sleep and eating a nutritious breakfast supports success on tests.



Actions define bullying

Middle schoolers don't always recognize bullying if a popular child is the one doing it. Tell your child to focus on what is happening. Are the actions hurtful? Are the words mean or meant to cause sadness, fear or embarrassment? If so, it's bullying—even if the bully is someone everyone likes and the person being bullied has few friends. Your child should alert an adult.

What led to poor choices?

Adolescents sometimes decide to do things they know are wrong. Helping them think through those choices afterward can strengthen their sense of integrity. Ask your child questions like:

- **What got in the way** of telling the truth?
- **Were you trying** to impress someone?
- **Would you want** to be known as someone who does that?



Prevent digital distraction

Middle schoolers regularly turn to digital media for information and entertainment, and many think that digital multitasking can help them with schoolwork. But texting, surfing and streaming while working can hurt performance. To help your child stay focused:

- **Discuss the fact** that multitasking doesn't work. Digital multitaskers wind up making more mistakes and their studies take longer.
- **Set limits** on device use during study time, such as: Only one computer window open at a time and unneeded devices go in a different room.



Source: K.E. May and A.D. Elder, "Efficient, helpful, or distracting? A literature review of media multitasking in relation to academic performance," *International Journal of Education Technology in Higher Education*, Springer.



Help your child resolve to start fresh

By January, many students need a little help reviving the routines and habits that support academic achievement. For a strong second half of the year, encourage your child to make some school-related New Year's resolutions.

Suggest that your middle schooler resolve to:

- **Work toward a new goal.** What would your student like to accomplish? Discuss what it will take to do it. Having clearly defined steps to follow makes it easier to do what's necessary.
- **Get organized.** This should include cleaning out book bags and filing papers regularly.
- **Maintain a schedule.** Help your child reestablish a work time and plan to take a short study break every hour or so to get up and move around. This improves focus and retention.
- **Prioritize.** Your child can resolve to create daily to-do lists and then identify the most important tasks. These are the ones that should be completed first.