

NEWSLETTER

BLAIR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS



Welcome Back!!

The 2024 - 2025 School Year is here! We are excited to welcome students back to our buildings. Please [click here](#) for the school supply list. Lists may also be found on your building's webpage.

Please ensure you have completed your student verification process at family.nebasis.org. Once completed, you will be able to see student's assigned teacher and schedules.



Open Houses

- K - 5: August 19th, 5:00 - 7:00 PM.
 - Families with last names A - K from 5:00 - 6:00
 - Families last names L - Z from 6:00 - 7:00
- 6th Grade: August 19th, 2024- 6 p.m.-7:30 p.m.
- 7th & 8th Grade: August 15th, 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.

Message from Blair Community Schools Superintendent, Dr. Randy Gilson

Dear Blair Community Schools Parents, Families, and Students,



As we prepare to embark on another exciting school year, I want to extend a warm welcome back to all our students, families, and staff. The summer months have been a busy and productive time across the district, and I am thrilled to share some of the exciting updates and improvements that have been made to enhance our learning environment and overall school experience.

Academic Improvements

We are excited to announce the purchase of a new building across the street from the high school. This facility will house an industry-leading Automotive Collision Technology Engineering Program in partnership with Metropolitan Community College, featuring a college instructor and dual credit college courses. Additionally, we will offer a college dual credit Powersports and Outdoor Power Technology program, led by Mr. Chris Schuler.

We are expanding our curriculum with new Agriculture Education programs at both the high school and middle school levels, offering students the opportunity to explore and develop skills in this vital industry. We have added a third teacher to our High Abilities program, ensuring that our gifted students receive the support and challenge they need to thrive.

Enhanced Science and Physical Education programs at the middle school level will provide students with hands-on learning experiences and opportunities to stay active. Our business and computer programming courses have been expanded with a new instructor to prepare students for success in the modern workforce. Metro Community College has also invested in expanded equipment for our Manufacturing program, allowing students to gain practical skills in a state-of-the-art environment.

Activity Additions

We continue to add activities to support diversified student interests including providing additional competitive Marching Band opportunities. Competitive Robotics teams have grown from four last year to eight. Blair has also added Unified Bowling this year to go along with Unified Track added last year. We are expanding our softball program to include lower levels, fostering talent and teamwork from a young age. Finally, we are also excited to introduce Cross Country to our middle school sports lineup, which had previously been a running club.

Facility Improvements

We have installed new air conditioning and heating systems in the cafeteria, kitchen, and gym, ensuring a comfortable environment for all our students and staff. The high school and middle school have been fitted with new carpeting, adding a fresh and welcoming atmosphere to our classrooms and hallways. The main gym floor at the high school has been completely refinished, and both gyms now feature brand-new heating and air conditioning systems. We have replaced the heating and air system in the Welding shop and added a new filtering system, providing an improved learning environment for our students.

Safety remains our top priority. We have replaced all exterior lighting across the district and expanded our camera system to provide additional coverage, ensuring a secure environment for everyone.

These improvements and additions reflect our commitment to providing the best possible education and extracurricular opportunities for our students. We are confident that these changes will enhance the learning environment, promote student success, and continue to build a strong, vibrant school community.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. We look forward to a fantastic school year ahead, filled with growth, learning, and achievement.

Sincerely,

Randy Gilson, Ed. D.

BLAIR CENTER FOR AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY

The Blair Center for Automotive Technology (BCAT) Building will be opening this school year for students in our Career and Technical classes. The former Allen Building (across the street from the Bus Barn) is being renovated to house several hands on courses including engine mechanics, auto repair, and auto collision classes. These courses are in partnership with Metro Community College, and students have the opportunity to earn dual credit at both MCC and Blair Community Schools.

The ability to offer our students these courses is a unique to Blair Community Schools, and we value this partnership with MCC. Our students have had the opportunity to take many advanced courses in the areas of welding, auto mechanics, construction, and more over the past several years, preparing them for in-demand career opportunities post-high school. This new building expands the opportunities we are able to offer. Over 100 students will be enrolled in the engine mechanics and auto courses at the BCAT this school year.



COMMUNITY DONATIONS

Thank you to the Washington County Chamber of Commerce for supporting our schools and our new teachers! Gift bags filled with donations from our Chamber Members were delivered to new staff, to welcome the new teachers at Blair Community Schools.

Dollar General employees also conducted a school supply drive, and we are very grateful for the ten bins of supplies they donated to Blair Schools! These will be disbursed to schools for student use.

We are grateful for the support of our community as we work to ensure that every teacher and student has a great start to the school year!

Happening In Our Schools



Blair High School

Welcome to the 2024/25 school year at Blair High School! We are excited to begin a new academic year filled with opportunities for growth and success! Student safety remains the District's top priority, and we have implemented comprehensive measures to ensure a secure learning environment. Our dedicated staff is here to provide academic support thus helping each student achieve their full potential. We also recognize the importance of social-emotional well-being and have resources in place to support our students' mental health.

To ensure a successful school year, remember these five keys: stay organized, set achievable goals, seek help when needed, balance academics with extracurricular activities, and take care of your mental and physical health. Together, we will navigate this school year with resilience and enthusiasm. Let's make it a fantastic year, filled with learning, growth, and memorable experiences!



Otte Blair Middle School

We are counting down the days to the start of the 2024-2025 school year, and we are so excited to welcome your middle school student into the Otte Middle School family. Student verification is now available online for you to fill out prior to the first day of school. Completing Student Verification provides you access to your student's schedule.

6th Grade Chromebook Rollout Night is Monday, August 19th, 2024- 6 p.m.-7:30 p.m. During this time, students will receive their locker number and schedule, and students can bring their materials to place in their lockers that night. We will gather in the gym at 7:05 p.m. for a short presentation. 7th and 8th Grade Chromebook Rollout Night will be Thursday, August 15th 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. Our food service provider (Taher) will be available for families to deposit money in their child's account. We will have an activities meeting for students and parents from 6:50-7:10 in the gym.

Happening In Our Schools



Arbor Park Elementary School

We're so excited to welcome all our students back into the building! The school is buzzing with energy, and it's great to see everyone ready to jump into a new year of learning and growing. A special shout-out to our new kindergarteners who had a blast at the Kindergarten Round Up! It was awesome to see so many happy faces, and we're excited to watch them start their school adventure. We know this year is going to be full of amazing moments for all our students.

We've also got some fun news—mark your calendars for September 13 because we're planning a Fun Run! It's going to be a great day where we can all come together, get active, and have some fun. We'll be sending out more details soon, so keep an eye out for how you and your family can join in. We can't wait to kick off the school year with such a fun event!



Deerfield Elementary School

We are ecstatic to kick off another wonderful school year here at Deerfield Elementary! Our school community has been hard at work the past few days getting our school and classrooms ready to welcome our scholars for the upcoming school year. Thanks to the contributions of our Families, Kindergarten Teachers, Special Education Teachers, and other Support Staff, our Kindergarten Round Up on August 8th was an incredible success. It was great to see how excited our incoming Kindergartners were to be joining our school community and for us to have an opportunity to connect with our families.

Mark your calendars for our upcoming Fun Run on September 13th! This will be a great opportunity for our Arbor Park and Deerfield scholars to be active together and have some fun! We are looking forward to another great year together and to see you soon at Open House on August 19th!

Happening In Our Schools



Blair Preschool

We are excited to start a new school year at South Early Childhood Center! Our school staff has been working hard to get the building and their classrooms ready. Teachers devoted preservice time to address routines, procedures, schedules, and program goals. Preschool kids will learn and progress in skills through the Teaching Strategies GOLD, Creative Curriculum.

Our team is looking forward to meeting with families at Home Visits between Wednesday, August 14 and Friday, August 16 to learn about your child. Teachers are anxious to meet new and returning preschoolers. Mark your calendars for Open House on August 19th!



2024-2025 Calendar

Please click the link below for the Blair Community Schools 2024-2025 calendar. Any changes or updates to the school year calendar will be communicated to families.

Please see your school's webpage for school specific events and announcements.

[CALENDAR](#)



Transportation News

Students who requested and qualified for transportation have received information on bus times and pick up locations. The district is in need of additional bus drivers. If you or someone you know are interested in driving for Blair Community Schools, please contact the Bus Barn at (402)426-4509. This is a great opportunity to support our students and community, while also earning some extra income.

[BUS REQUEST](#)

BCS RECEIVES DIAMOND BADGE CERTIFICATION

Blair Community Schools is proud to receive a Diamond Badge Certification in Nebraska School Safety & Security! This award certifies that at BCS, we “Place School Safety First” and are meeting the highest of the Nebraska Department of Education’s safety & security standards in keeping our school community safe and secure.

Our district has continued to review and adopt the latest safety and security standards to ensure that our students and staff are safe. Recent safety updates to our buildings have included updated outdoor lighting, window blinds for classrooms to remove line of sight from hallways, and the addition of red lights in the shop and weight room to alert students and staff to safety situations if the conditions are too loud to hear overhead announcements.

In addition to these building updates, our district also practices the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) for emergencies, in partnership with local law enforcement. As a part of this SRP, we practice a reunification process to follow emergency situations. This practice was put to great use following the tornados which occurred last April, which saw our staff following their SRP training and reunification.

All staff members are also equipped with our Lock Now App which is a district wide alert system which uses SRP verbiage and alerts staff of any emergency situations and allows them to communicate and get updates via their phones. These measures are continuously reviewed and updated as necessary, to ensure that our students safety is the top priority.



BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Blair Community Schools Board of Education (BOE) met on August 12, 2024 at 7:00 PM at North Administrative Building. The BOE approved the BHS Dance Team to attend the National Dance Team Championship in Orlando, FL in January. This is the first time a BHS Dance team has qualified for this event, and is a great achievement!

The Policy Committee regularly reviews district policies for any necessary changes. While there may not be recommended changes, they are still analyzed and reapproved regularly. Several policies that had been reviewed were recommended for approval by the BOE. These included policies for the adoption of curriculum, school safety policies, instructional hours review, assessment security, and graduation requirements, among others. [For full board minutes, please click here.](#)





Activities & Events

Fall activities are kicking off! The High School and Middle school will both be hosting Parent Meetings on August 15 from 6:50–7:10 pm for parents of students who are participating in activities. Many activities are offered for students, and we strongly encourage our students to participate in a club, activity, or sport. Fall Sports Offered include Cross Country, Volleyball, and Football. Activities Offered include Marching Band, Jazz Band, Honor Band, Show Choir and Honor Choir, drama, and more.

The soft ball team will be hosting their pre-season scrimmage this Saturday, August 17th. This will also be the Fall Sport Media Day with pictures for fall activities being held in the gym. Head coaches and sponsors have the schedule for photos, which they will share with teams.

The Blair Schools Foundation Family Fun Night is August 23. The volleyball scrimmage begins at 5:30 PM, with the football scrimmage following at 7:00 PM. The volleyball scrimmage begins at 5:30 PM with the football scrimmage following at 7:00 PM. The BHS choir will perform the national anthem, the marching band will perform at halftime, as well as a performance by the National qualifying BHS dance team! Following the football scrimmage, the Cross Country team will have their annual Friday Night Lights. The public is invited to join the team in running on the outside lanes of the track, while the team runs on the inside lanes.

Please visit the [Blair Schools Foundation's Facebook page](#) for more information.

We appreciate your support of our students, and encourage you to join us to watch our students shine! **Please click here for a full list of events.**







Join us for
FAMILY FUN NIGHT

Friday, August 23 • Doors Open 5:00 pm
Blair High School • Free Admission

- Volleyball Scrimmage - 5:30 pm - BHS Gym
- Football Scrimmage - 7:00 pm - Krantz Field
- Cross Country Friday Night Lights
- Bounce House Village
- Face Painting and Airbrush Tattoos
- Balloon Twisting
- Student Performances
- Virtual Reality Experience Provided by RVR
- Hot Dog Meal Provided by WCB
- Food Trucks & Full Concession Stand Available
- Plus, a Fireworks Display by Midwest Fireworks!



Follow us on social media!

 <p>FACEBOOK</p>	 <p>INSTAGRAM</p>
 <p>YOU TUBE</p>	 <p>X (FORMERLY TWITTER)</p>