

## Good day to all Parents and Patrons:

Fall is upon us and soon the snow will be flying! Now is the time to make sure you are following Conestoga Public Schools on Social Media! Not only do you receive updates on happenings within the school and sporting events, you will also receive information about snow days, early dismissals, and late starts! Of course, that information will also be shared on the school notifications platforms.

The ongoing HVAC project is finally nearing completion. The first units were set in place in late September and are in the process of being hooked up. This has been a long drawn out affair. Some units were delayed in delivery and one of those was damaged in shipping. Needless to say, we are all excited to see this project finally come to an end.

Bond construction and ground breaking will begin in the Spring and the construction process will all begin again. Currently, the finer details of the project are being laid out and finalized.

The track resurface has been completed and at the time of this writing, we are still waiting for the lanes to be marked. Our student athletes should find that the surface is superb and ready for track action!

Lastly, the gym floor refinishing was moved from the summer, due to the HVAC work. It will be done between sports seasons and should be completed in a couple of days.

Thank you to everyone for all of your support shown to Conestoga!

**Mike Apple - Superintendent**

## **A Note from the Jr/Sr High Principal: Mr. Rob Geise**

We've had an outstanding start to the 2024-2025 school year! The teachers and students are working hard to ensure the year is a great one. I want to thank our entire school community for making the start of the school year an awesome experience for everyone. We're looking forward to keeping the positive momentum going.

### **New Faces in the Jr/Sr High Building:**

- Ms. Anna Harveson– Instrumental Music
- Ms. Jennifer Swerczek – Middle School Science
- Mr. Shawn Brothers – Business

### **We love our amazing students, school spirit and culture!**



### **Helpful Links / Info:**

Jr/Sr HS Twitter Handle: [@c1stoga](https://twitter.com/c1stoga)

District Webpage: [@c1stogadistrict](https://www.conestogadistrict.org)

District Twitter Handle: [www.conestogacougars.org](https://www.conestogacougars.org)

Activities: <https://www.nebraskacapitolconference.org/public/genie/475/school/4875/>

### **Outstanding Students and Teachers**

I'd be remiss if I didn't mention the outstanding students and teachers that we have at Conestoga Jr/Sr High School. I'm amazed at the great things our students accomplish. They represent our community to a very high standard day in and day out. The teachers put our students first, they grow and try new things and continually do great things for our students. They truly care about each and every student in our building!

**GO COUGARS!!**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

## SAEBRS Screening in October

Our school will be conducting the Social, Academic, and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener (SAEBRS) this October. This brief assessment is designed to identify students who may be at risk for social, academic, or emotional behavior challenges.

## About the SAEBRS

The SAEBRS is a 19-item universal screener that evaluates three key domains:

1. Social Behavior
2. Academic Behavior
3. Emotional Behavior

Teachers will complete the SAEBRS for each student, rating the frequency of various behaviors observed over the past month. This tool helps our school:

- Identify students who may benefit from additional support
- Determine appropriate interventions
- Ensure we're meeting the social-emotional needs of all students

## Purpose

The purpose of this screening is to:

- Promote student success in school
- Provide early identification of potential challenges
- Guide the implementation of targeted support and interventions

## Opt-Out Option

If you prefer that your child not participate in the SAEBRS screening, please contact Nick Krause at [nkrause@conestogacougars.org](mailto:nkrause@conestogacougars.org) by October 18th. We believe this screening will help us better support your child's overall well-being and academic success. If you have any questions about the SAEBRS or the screening process, please don't hesitate to reach out.

We are almost two months into the 2024-2025 fall seasons and there are plenty of great things to celebrate so far! Our teams are competing hard, many of our students are participating in numerous activities, and our fans have been awesome cheering on our teams. We also had a great fall activities pep rally!



Many of our activities have been attending training and conferences throughout the fall. These activities have been both competitive and informational. Our groups have represented Conestoga well. Fall athletics are in full swing. Football is halfway through their season, softball just finished up their conference tournament, and volleyball and cross country will compete in their conference tournament and race soon. Districts are on the horizon. Junior high cross country, football, and volleyball competing hard as well. Cheer and dance have been busy as well!

Homecoming Week 2024 will be October 13-19. This year's theme will be "Tropical Paradise". More information will be sent to students and families.



**Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment:  
Lisa Bergmeyer**

As we wrap up quarter one, I want to take a moment to highlight the vital role that families play in the educational journey of our students. Whether your child is in elementary or high school, your support at home can significantly enhance their learning experience. Here are some strategies tailored for both age groups that can help nurture academic success.

**For Elementary School Students:**

1. **Create a Learning Environment:** Set up a dedicated, distraction-free study area. Having a consistent place for homework helps establish a routine and signals to your child that it's time to focus.
2. **Reading Ritual:** Spend at least 20 minutes every other day reading together. This not only improves literacy skills but also fosters a love for books. Ask questions about the story to enhance comprehension and critical thinking.
3. **Incorporate Learning into Daily Life:** Use everyday situations as learning opportunities. For example, involve your child in cooking to practice math skills like measuring ingredients, or use grocery shopping to discuss budgeting and planning.
4. **Encourage Questions:** Foster a curious mindset by encouraging your child to ask questions about what they learn at school. Engage in discussions about their day and what piqued their interest.
5. **Limit Screen Time:** While technology can be a valuable educational tool, it's essential to balance it with hands-on activities. Set boundaries around screen time to ensure your child engages in diverse learning experiences.

**For High School Students:**

1. **Establish a Study Schedule:** Help your teen develop a study plan that accommodates their workload and extracurricular activities. A visual calendar can assist in tracking assignments and upcoming exams.
2. **Discuss Goals and Aspirations:** Regularly check in on your child's academic and career goals. Understanding their aspirations can help you provide the support they need to pursue them.
3. **Encourage Independence:** High school is a crucial time for developing responsibility. Encourage your child to take ownership of their homework and projects while offering guidance and support as needed. Encourage them to plan ahead and prep all items for school the night before, including charging their school device!
4. **Create a Supportive Atmosphere:** Be available for discussions about stress, time management, and any academic challenges they might face. Show understanding and offer solutions rather than simply providing answers.
5. **Promote Extracurricular Engagement:** Encourage your teen to participate in clubs, sports, or other extracurricular activities. These experiences not only enhance their resume but also build essential life skills like teamwork and leadership.

**Thank you for your continued support and commitment to our students' success.**

**Together, we can foster an enriching environment that promotes growth and learning.**

## Spanish Students Participate in Virtual Exchange with Students in Mexico

This fall, Spanish 3 and 4 students are participating in a virtual exchange program with students in an English class in Mérida, México. This program is sponsored and funded by AFS Global Up Americas. As a part of the program, students meet six times in live sessions on Google Meet with their peers in Mexico. They speak in both Spanish and English as they get to know each other and practice their language skills. Before the sessions, they complete in online modules teaching and modeling different aspects of intercultural communication including learning styles, cultural value dimensions, resiliency, inequality, conflict and diverse perspectives.

Students learn a lot about themselves as a part of the program, and have experienced a lot of personal growth. Spanish 3 student KK shares “It allows us to grow our Spanish communication skills and intercultural skills.” Spanish 4 student Alyssa adds “It is really interesting getting to know how the daily lives of teenagers in Mexico are similar and different to our daily routines. It is fun to see just how much we have in common.”

Upon successful completion of the program, students will receive a Certificate of Global Competence from AFS. As teachers, both Maestra Spangler and Teacher Emily in Mexico have enjoyed watching the students grow. It is a lot of fun to see them so genuinely invested in language learning and eager to make connections across cultures. We both hope to continue the exchange once the official program is over! Thank you to all of the parents and staff members that have allowed this program to be such a success.



## FFA Members Kickstart the School Year

This summer, FFA members served pancakes at the Murray Freedom Festival, grew and sold sweet corn as a chapter fundraiser, helped with mutton busting at the Cass County Fair, and had a fun summer meeting. Many members showed cattle, pigs, and horses at the Cass and Otoe county fairs and worked to develop their supervised agricultural experiences. To start off the school year, FFA members had a kickoff meeting and our chapter has a recent record of 37 chapter members this year. In September, thirty-one students attended Husker Harvest Days in Wood River to learn about agricultural careers and technologies, and nine freshmen attended the Ignite Leadership Conference in Kearney. In October, members will compete in land judging and livestock evaluation contests and 16 new members will be welcomed through the new jacket ceremony. This year, FFA members will participate in the Connecting Chapters Program sponsored by the Nebraska Farm Bureau and an Ag Pen Pal program with a chapter in western Nebraska. FFA members are looking forward to an exciting year ahead!



2024-2025 FFA Officer Team: Logan Peterson -Sentinel, Robbi Zech -Secretary, Bridget Murdoch - Reporter, Ava Weides -Treasurer, Cydney Vincent -Vice President, Louie Caniglia -President



FFA members attended Husker Harvest Days in Wood River and learned about ag careers and technology!



Nine Freshmen FFA members attended the Ignite Leadership Conference in Kearney.

FFA members served pancakes and sausage at the Murray Freedom Festival!



FFA members at the September chapter meeting!



Conestoga Public Schools  
P.O. Box 184  
Murray, NE 68409-0184  
An Equal Opportunity Employer  
Change Service Requested

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Murray, NE  
Permit #3

