



## Board of Education Updates

The Blair Community Schools Board of Education met on Monday, March 16, 2026. At this meeting the Blair Community Schools Board approved a proposal from Kordica Communications to conduct a district-wide communications audit. This initiative aims to enhance engagement with both internal and external stakeholders, with a rollout timeline designed to remain mindful of staff workloads as the school year concludes.

The district also celebrated several generous donations, including nearly \$4,000 from the Gridiron Club for football equipment and nutrition, \$1,000 from Sid Dillon Chevrolet for volleyball, and \$2,000 from the BCS Foundation to renovate the High School Wall of Fame. Additionally, infrastructure improvements are moving forward with security upgrades at Arbor Park and Otte Middle School to match the safety standards at Deerfield and the High School.

Personnel updates for the 2026-2027 school year include the hiring of Aaron Stueve, Tracey Weiser, and Caitlyn Colter, while John Roan and Leon Haith will continue in their current administrative roles. The Board also accepted several resignations and the retirements of Karla Gregory and Lisa Lienen, wishing them all the best in their future endeavors.

The Board concluded by expressing deep appreciation for the hard work and dedication of all staff members. Staff commitment to our students is what makes Blair Community Schools such a special place. Thank you!

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# A Message from Blair Community Schools Superintendent, Dr. Don Johnson



Dear Blair Community,

March has been an exciting and inspiring month across our district. We were thrilled to see our girls' basketball team compete at the State Tournament. The energy and support from our community were truly remarkable, and we are incredibly proud of the Lady Bears, their coaches, and their accomplishments. Moments like these highlight the dedication, teamwork, and resilience of our students.

Throughout the month, I have also had the opportunity to attend numerous athletic events and fine arts performances. Our students continue to represent Blair with excellence, both in competition and on stage. Their commitment and conduct reflect positively on our schools and community, and we could not be more proud of their efforts.

The Board of Education has also had a productive and forward-looking month. They have approved an agreement with Kordia Communications to conduct a comprehensive Communication Audit. This process will evaluate how information is shared within our district and with our broader community, including students, families, and stakeholders. Our goal is to strengthen transparency, improve communication, and ensure that all voices feel heard and valued. We are committed to building stronger relationships and fostering greater collaboration in support of our students.

As our district continues to grow, we are also focused on ensuring that our staffing structures effectively support student success. Our administrative team has been working diligently to refine our Human Resources processes and align staffing across the district. Through careful analysis and comparison with similar districts, we have identified opportunities for improvement.

Specifically, we have recognized a need to strengthen support at the district level in Special Education and Technology services, and we are taking steps to address those needs. At the same time, we are approaching staffing adjustments thoughtfully by evaluating positions as they become vacant and making strategic decisions that promote efficiency while maintaining high-quality instruction. Through natural attrition and careful planning, we have been able to make adjustments without compromising student support.

I want to express my sincere appreciation to our Board of Education, administrators, teachers, and staff for their commitment to continuous improvement and positive change. Your dedication makes a meaningful difference in the lives of our students every day.

As we move forward with the Communication Audit, we encourage you to share your perspectives and feedback. Your voice is essential as we work together to strengthen Blair Community Schools and continue striving toward excellence for all students.

With appreciation,

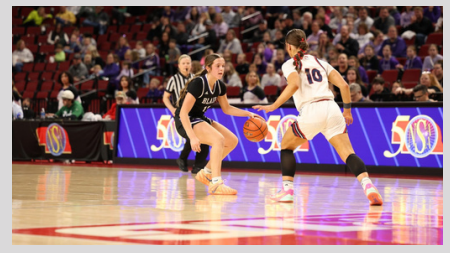
Dr. J



# Girls State Basketball

Making it to the NSAA Class B State Championship tournament was a dream come true for the Blair High School girls basketball team. After a heartbreaking district final loss to Scottsbluff, the Bears' 2025–26 season appeared to be over until they discovered they had secured a wildcard spot while on the long bus ride home. The entire community rallied behind them for their first-round matchup against top-seeded Norris at Pinnacle Bank Arena (PBA) in Lincoln. To ensure the stands were packed with purple and white, Blair Community Schools dismissed all students early at 11:00 AM on game day, March 5, 2026, allowing families and fans to make the trip south to support the team.

The atmosphere at PBA was electric as the Blair band, dance team, and cheerleaders all took the floor to perform, making it a memorable experience for everyone involved. Although the Bears fought hard against a formidable Norris team, they ultimately fell 64-33, ending their impressive season with a 17-8 record. Despite the loss, Coach Matt Aschoff emphasized that the achievement of playing on such a grand stage was a milestone that would stay with the players forever. It was a season of resilience and heart that brought the city of Blair together in a powerful show of school spirit.



Pictures by Kendra Powers

# Read Across America Week

Across Blair Community Schools, Read Across America Week brought the magic of stories to life through creativity and community. At South School, students dived into the whimsical world of Dr. Seuss with a flurry of hands-on activities. They cooked up "Green Eggs and Ham," engineered their own Truffula Trees from *The Lorax*, and even followed precise recipe cards to mix batches of sticky Oobleck. From patterning tall hats like the *Cat in the Hat* to using unique manipulative to measure their feet for *The Foot Book*, every themed dress-up day turned the hallways into a vibrant celebration of literacy.

The excitement continued at Arbor Park and Deerfield, where the focus shifted to the joy of shared reading. Classrooms were buzzing as they welcomed a diverse group of guest readers, ranging from 3rd-5th grade "reading buddies" to dedicated community volunteers. This collaborative spirit allowed older students to serve as role models while younger ones discovered new favorite tales. By bringing together students, staff, and local guests, Blair Community Schools successfully transformed a week of reading into a lasting memory that built genuine enthusiasm for books across every grade level.



# Extravabandza

The energy in the Blair High School gym was electric as the 2026 Extravabandza brought together every horn and drum from the sixth grade up to the seniors for a night of high-stakes harmony. While the music soared, the real drama unfolded at the donation tables, where parents and alumni scrambled to buy \$5 ball pit balls to "vote" for their favorite grade level in a fierce but friendly funding war. The stakes were high: the band that raised the most money earned the glory of seeing their director get pied in the face right on the gym floor. As the final notes of the combined finale faded, the Blair Fine Arts Boosters tallied the digital and bucket donations, proving that a little bit of competitive spirit—and the promise of a face full of whipped cream—could successfully fund another year of sheet music, instruments, and travel for the entire program.



## From Blair to Arlington: Liam Honors the Fallen

Standing amidst the rhythmic clicks of the Guard's heels and the heavy silence of Arlington National Cemetery, Liam Casey, a 5<sup>th</sup> grade student from Deerfield Elementary, stepped forward with remarkable poise. He carried the weight of a nation's gratitude as he approached the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

As he carefully placed the ceremonial wreath against the white marble, the small-town roots of Blair met the vast history of American sacrifice. It was a profound moment of reverence, marking a milestone for a young man chosen to honor those who gave everything for their country.

Seeing a peer step into such a solemn and prestigious role serves as a powerful reminder that impact isn't reserved for the future—it's happening right now. For students back home in Blair, Liam's journey to the Tomb shows that they, too, can be ambassadors of respect and leadership on a national stage.

By witnessing one of their own participate in this sacred tradition, young people are inspired to see themselves as capable of doing truly impactful things, bridging the gap between history books and real-world service.



# HAPPENING IN OUR SCHOOLS



## Blair High School

March was a busy month for Blair High School, highlighted by several successful musical events. The "ExtravaBandza" brought together 6th through 12th-grade bands for a unique fundraiser, ending with Mr. Jaworski taking a pie to the face for the Fine Arts Boosters. This was followed by the annual Pops Concert on March 17th, which showcased a diverse array of talent ranging from solo dancers and singers to the Ovation show choir.

Beyond the arts, the school focused on community and academics. FFA members hosted Ag Safety Day for local 4th and 5th graders, providing hands-on lessons about machinery and the livestock industry. The month concluded with a staff appreciation coffee event hosted by the McClains and a dedicated testing day on March 24th for sophomores and juniors to complete the PreACT and ACT.



## Otte Blair Middle School

March was an exciting and busy month at the middle school, filled with opportunities for our students to shine. Our band and choir programs put on outstanding performances during their spring concerts, showcasing the hard work and dedication of our students and directors. A special highlight was our 8th grade choir's opportunity to perform at the State Capitol, representing our school with pride and excellence. In addition, both our 8th grade band and choir earned superior ratings at the Platteview contest, an incredible accomplishment that reflects their commitment to excellence. We were also proud to see our staff come together to support our fellow teacher, Coach Aschoff and the girls' basketball team during the state basketball tournament, another demonstration of the strong sense of community within our school.

Beyond the stage and court, our students are continuing to excel in a variety of areas. Track season is officially underway, and we are excited to see our athletes compete and grow throughout the spring. The fourth quarter is off to a great start, with students focused and engaged in their learning. As we look ahead, state testing is quickly approaching, and our students are prepared and ready to show what they know. We are proud of their effort and look forward to celebrating their continued success.

# HAPPENING IN OUR SCHOOLS



## Arbor Park Elementary

Arbor Park had a great time celebrating Read Across America Week. Classrooms welcomed a variety of guest readers—from 3rd–5th grade students visiting younger classrooms to community members and other special guests who volunteered their time to read with our students. It was a fun way to build excitement around books across the school. Many of our classes are also looking forward to upcoming field trips to the Rose Theater and the Omaha Children’s Museum, which are always highlights of the spring.

Our second graders also enjoyed a visit from Dr. Boyd, who stopped by to share a lesson on dental health. Students learned about the importance of brushing and flossing and what dentists do to help keep our smiles healthy. We’re grateful for community members like Dr. Boyd who take the time to support learning at Arbor Park.



## Deerfield Elementary

March has been a busy and exciting month at Deerfield Elementary, filled with meaningful learning and special events for our students. One highlight was Ag Safety Day, where our 4th and 5th grade students visited the high school and participated in hands-on activities led by FFA members. Students explored agricultural equipment, learned about livestock, and even created their own corn mazes!

We also celebrated Read Across America Week with several special guest readers visiting our classrooms. Students enjoyed hearing a variety of stories and sharing in the excitement of reading together. Our 2nd and 3rd grade students took the stage for their Spring Sings and did an outstanding job. Their performances showcased not only their musical talents but also their confidence and hard work.

It’s been a great month at Deerfield, and we are proud of our students for the effort, growth, and positivity they continue to show each day. Thank you for your continued support in making our school such a special place.

# HAPPENING IN OUR SCHOOLS



## South Early Childhood Center

As we transitioned into March, our building celebrated Read Across America Week with themed dress-up days and many fun activities based around some of our favorite Dr. Seuss books.

Our Full-Day Program has just begun and exploration into the topic of water while our Half-Day Program recently dove into a study on buildings.

After we returned from Spring Break, classrooms spent time reviewing our 3Bs: Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Safe. We also practiced our previously-learned routines both in the classroom and also shared areas of our school. This month our Second Step lessons will also focus on identifying problems, stating the problem, and coming up with solutions with our peers. Students are also looking forward to celebrating the first day of Spring and spending a lot of time outdoors practicing those social skills with friends! Happy Spring!

## Blair Show Choir Makes History as Grand Champions

Blair High School show choir made history under the stage lights at Bellevue East, earning the title of Grand Champions for the first time in school history. As the final results were announced, the room filled with excitement and pride, marking a moment that students and supporters will not soon forget.

This achievement came after months of hard work, including long rehearsals, vocal preparation, and attention to every detail of their performance. The group delivered a high-energy routine that showcased both their technical skill and their passion for performing.

The celebration continued on the bus ride home, where the reality of the accomplishment began to sink in. This win represents more than a trophy—it reflects the dedication of the students, the leadership of their directors, and the continued support of the Blair community.

Being named Grand Champions among a strong field of competitors is a significant milestone for the program and sets a new standard for future performers. This year's group has left a lasting mark and created a moment that will be remembered for years to come.



# Ag Safety Day Brings Hands-On Learning to Life

On Wednesday, March 18th, high school FFA members hosted an engaging and educational Ag Safety Day for 4th and 5th grade students from Arbor Park and Deerfield Elementary. The event provided a unique opportunity for younger students to experience agriculture in a hands-on, interactive way.

Throughout the day, students rotated through a variety of stations led by FFA members. Activities included creating their own corn mazes, learning about the different types of machinery used at each stage of the agricultural process, and exploring key aspects of the livestock industry. Students were able to see equipment up close and gain a better understanding of how agriculture impacts their daily lives.

One of the highlights of the day was the opportunity to interact with animals and view tractors brought in by FFA students. The high school members took the lead in organizing and running each station, demonstrating both their knowledge and leadership skills while creating a fun and safe learning environment.

Ag Safety Day was a great example of collaboration across grade levels and schools, giving elementary students meaningful, real-world connections while showcasing the leadership and dedication of our FFA program.



# Pops Concert Showcases Student Talent



On Tuesday, March 17th, we hosted our annual Pops Concert, and it was a fantastic evening filled with talent, energy, and student creativity.

Students who were interested in performing had the opportunity to audition ahead of time, and a variety of acts were selected for the show. The audience enjoyed an impressive lineup that included solo singers, student bands, and solo dance performances, highlighting the wide range of talent in our school.



In addition to the auditioned acts, several of our established music groups took the stage. Both the boys and girls choirs delivered strong performances, the a cappella group entertained the crowd, and the show choir group, Ovation, brought great energy with their routine.

From start to finish, the Pops Concert was a celebration of student voice and performance. It was a great night and a wonderful reminder of the talent we have in our school community.



## Activities & Athletics

March has been a very exciting month for the athletes and performers of Blair Community Schools.

March in Blair kicked off with an electric atmosphere as the community rallied behind the Girls Basketball team for their State tournament run in Lincoln. It was a fantastic way to cap off the winter season, and we are so grateful for the incredible hometown support that followed the girls every step of the way.

With basketball wrapping up, the energy has shifted outdoors for the start of spring sports. Fields and courts are buzzing as girls and boys soccer, baseball, girls tennis, and boys golf teams begin their seasons. We are also thrilled to see our track and field and Unified track athletes back in action, ready to compete and represent Blair with pride.

The fine arts programs have had an equally impressive month. Our Show Choir delivered a powerhouse performance at Bellevue East, securing a first-place finish that showcased their incredible talent and dedication. Their hard work continues to set a high bar for excellence in our district.





The musical momentum stayed strong with the annual "Extravabandza." This unique event brought together our middle school and high school bands for a massive collaborative performance. It was a wonderful display of the growth and continuity within our music department, from our youngest players to our graduating seniors.

Reflecting on the month, March has been a whirlwind of achievement for all Blair activities. From the bright lights in Lincoln to the harmony of the concert hall, our students have given us so much to be proud of. We can't wait to see what the rest of the spring season brings!

It is a Great Day to be a Bear!

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 current activities and events.](#)**

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