



**Holdingsford Elementary School  
Principal's Newsletter  
March 2020**

Minnesota tough and lucky, hot dog, we beat the odds and actually held conferences on time without a weather cancellation or delay. I am going to take that as the very first sign of spring.

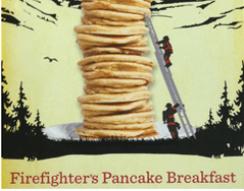
Mom and Dad, Grandma and Grandpa, Guardians: From the bottom of my heart, and with sincerest appreciations, thank you for helping support your child's educational journey by attending conferences. Your support and your trust mean the world to us. Together, we help grow children to be the best they can be. Thank you for supporting your child's academic growth by working at home on academics such as spelling, writing, math, and reading. I would also like to thank our parents for continually reinforcing and teaching appropriate manners, healthy lifestyle choices, and friendship skills. Your family values help create our learning environment and contribute greatly to the success of our school. Thank you!

I would also like to thank our outstanding teachers and sensational support staff for all their work getting children and classrooms ready. Teachers, thank you for the many hours spent at school and at home preparing report cards and conference celebrations and concerns. Most of our classroom teachers reported 100% parental attendance. So cool! Sadly, not every school is like this! I am proud of who we are, what we do for children, and how we work together! Simply stated...I love our school and I love being a Husker!

Last but not least, I would like to thank our hard working and fun loving student body. Children, you are the heartbeat of our school. It is your hard work and positive safe choices that help set the weather in our school. We love you, we are proud of you, and we want each and every child to know we try really hard to recognize what makes each child special and unique. Thank you for always sharing your smiles, manners, friendship skills, and Husker work ethic with us! Together, we can make our families stronger, our school better, our communities healthier, and the world a better place to learn, laugh, and grow.

Sincerely,

Principal Stang



**Holdingford Firefighter Relief Association Breakfast Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup> 8:30-12:30:**

**Please set aside time on Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup> and bring your family to Holdingford City Hall for a yummy free will donation pancake, eggs, sausage, ham, hash browns, fruit, carmel roll breakfast. Please support our Firefighters! 24/7 ready and willing to serve! The Husker Way!**



**Homework Tips to Get Ready for MCA Math, Reading, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Science, and End**

**of the Year Benchmarks:** Homework help starts with families setting aside a quiet time and place for their children to read and study spelling words, math, and language arts. Building habits that lead to independent study and reading for enjoyment are essential. Let your child know you expect them to do their homework and that you are always there for them if they need you. Help them understand that their homework is their job. It took my family a while to fall into this routine. Once we perfected turning off the TV before dinner, eating as a family, then clearing the table immediately for homework in the kitchen, homework challenges disappeared. If my children chose not to do homework we found various jobs for them to do, such as drying dishes, taking out garbage or folding laundry. My children did very few dishes and my wife and I had dish pan hands! LOL! Seriously though, it was a small price to pay for good grades and alleviated the stress at the end of the night with mystery homework or “I forgot” excuses. Carrie and I really liked this strategy when the weather turned nice in spring. Homework needed to be done before leaving the table and going outside to play!



**Kindergarten Information Meeting:** Our annual kindergarten meeting will be held

on March 9, 2020. This meeting is for parents of children who will be enrolling in kindergarten for the 2020-2021 school year. The meeting will take place in the Elementary Media Center, with sessions at 4:00 or 6:00 pm. Our AWESOME kindergarten staff is excited to meet you and brag a bit about their kindergarten program and our school. Please be talking to neighbors and friends and encourage them to choose Holdingford Elementary as their child’s first and only school. Small class sizes, family values, excellent teachers and support staff that work tirelessly to meet the social, emotional, and academic needs of all children, a full time school social worker, classrooms utilizing Promethium Interactive

boards, I-pads, sensational specialists in the areas of music, art, media center and computer labs, await the class of 2033!



**Summer School:** Administration and staff are in the process of coordinating our Targeted Services Summer School Program. During conferences, our teachers spoke with many parents about the academic, social, and behavioral benefits provided by our summer school program. During the week of March 10<sup>th</sup>, the elementary office will send out initial confirmation letters of attendance. Summer school is scheduled for July 7<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>, every Monday-Friday, from 8:30-11:30 am. Transportation and snacks will be provided for students enrolled in this program.



**Good Health = Great Effort = Best TEST Scores:** I have been blessed to have worked as a teacher and administrator in three different Reward Schools. Each of the schools had unique programming, demographics, finances and curriculum in order to meet the needs of their student population. One of the commonalities that stands out amongst the three schools are teachers, support staff, students, families, school board, and community going the extra mile stressing the significance of work ethic, grit, determination, and making learning a priority. As spring quickly approaches, so do our annual Minnesota Comprehension Assessments (MCAs). Once again, the elementary is required to assess all third through sixth grade students in math and reading, and all fifth grade students in science. Please review your spring calendars to avoid any conflicts or absences with the following assessment dates:

- April 6-17            Grades 3-6 Reading
- April 20-May 1      Grades 3-6 Math
- May 4-8              5<sup>th</sup> Grade Science

**MCAs:** Holdingford Elementary students have consistently performed quite well on their MCAs. With your continued support and encouragement of academic performance, we can continue to prepare our children for the challenges of their teen years and adulthood. Please help us continue testing excellence by following these recommendations:

1. Get in the habit of a nutritious breakfast every morning.

2. Get into a regular sleep routine - most children need 9-10 hours per night.
3. Exercise increases oxygen to the brain, assisting memory and process functions.
4. Read directions completely and carefully, and ask questions.
5. Skim the question and prioritize possible options.
6. When test is completed, go back and review.



**The Husker High Five is alive and well at Holdingford Elementary!**

I sometimes feel that watching the nightly news is a constant barrage of human negativity. I cannot imagine sending my child to a school that barrages them with negative feedback and consequences. Our school has always done a GREAT job catching students being good and giving productive positive feedback on learning and school choices. Staff again this year have risen to the challenge of making a positive school even better by empowering our children to use the Husker High Five pillars of good character to compliment family and school values. I smile every time I hear a student asking for a Husker High Five or sharing a cheerful story of how they were given a BUG slip. Being Unusually Good has become contagious throughout the building and classrooms.



### **March notes from your K – 12 Social Worker:**

March is here and the snow is melting! With the weather being warmer recently, I hope your family got to enjoy it together to spend quality time with each other and share some good celebrations from conferences! If you are a parent who struggles getting your children outside to explore the outdoors, there may be a solution! One fun way to encourage your children to actively use their electronics outdoors is through an app called “geocaching.” Geocaching is a free app that is equivalent to treasure hunting wherever you are located. There are millions of clever containers called “geocaches” hidden in almost every country on Earth, just waiting to be found. So whether you live in Holdingford, Rice, or Avon, this is something you can do with your family outdoors to get outside and enjoy a walk with a surprise at your destination. After downloading the app, the user will get tips, hints, and instructions for geocaching in their area and unlock a world of treasure hunting! If electronics are not available, coming

up with a treasure hunt around your local park or backyard will help stimulate the creativity and adventure our students crave just as much as an app on a phone or electronic device. There's no better way to explore the outdoors with the ones you love and call family! Happy Treasure Hunting!



### **Being an excellent role-model and a quality friend:**

Got rumors? Gossip? Drama? Hurt feelings and more? Whether your child is in kindergarten or in the high school, they will soon become familiar with the phenomena. The dictionary defines a rumor as “a currently circulating story or report of uncertain or doubtful truth”. A circulation of a story, true or not, shared without permission can cause emotional harm to the person it’s about. Please talk with your children about how they can have Husker integrity while dealing with rumors.

I show my Husker integrity by:

- Being Ready
- Being Respectful
- Being Responsible

Every Day and Everywhere!

**Being Ready:** Decide whether it's hurtful or harmless. When you hear something about someone you know and have the urge to pass it on, don't think about whether it's true or not. Instead, ask yourself these questions:

- Why do I want to pass this on?
- Would I want people to know this kind of information about me?
- How will this person feel if he or she knew this rumor was being spread?
- Will this rumor reduce this person's status or make him or her excluded from the group?

Your answers will help you figure out the right thing to do.

**Being Respectful:** Make the rumor stop with you. If you decide that the rumor is hurtful in some way, make a stand. Decide that you don't want to take part in spreading it. Others may continue to circulate the gossip, but you've made a personal choice to stay out of it. Chances are that the rumor will die out much more quickly than if you had joined the buzz.

**Being Responsible:** When someone comes to you with a rumor, try not to be an audience. This person may want to hurt somebody, or may be after attention or power. It can be hard to resist hearing some

juicy dish, especially if you're bored, but make an effort to say, "I'm not interested in hearing mean gossip, thanks."

Just like with physical bullying, there are no "innocent bystanders" with hurtful rumors. Hearing and reacting to the rumor, and letting it continue, makes you almost as responsible for its damage as the person who started it. Instead, don't provide another pair of ears for the rumor-starter. If s/he isn't getting the reaction or attention he's seeking, he'll be less likely to do it in the future.



## 10 GREAT REASONS TO PLAY +1

1. **Play lays the foundation for literacy.** Through play children learn to make and practice new sounds. They try out new vocabulary, on their own or with friends, and exercise their imagination through storytelling.
2. **Play is learning.** Play nurtures development and fulfills a baby's inborn need to learn. Play takes many forms, from shaking a rattle to peek-a-boo to hide-and-seek. Play can be done by a child alone, with another child, in a group or with an adult.
3. **Play encourages adults to communicate with the children in their lives.** Adults support play by giving children opportunities to play, and by knowing when to intervene, and when not to intervene.
4. **Play gives children the chance to be spontaneous.** You may think your child should be rolling the truck on the ground but that doesn't mean that truck is not equally useful as a stacking toy.
5. **Play gives children choice.** Having enough toys or activities to choose from will allow children to express themselves.
6. **Play gives children space.** To practice physical movement, balance and to test their own limits.
7. **Play gives adults the chance to learn how to play again.** One of the most challenging parts of play is incorporating yourself in it.
8. **Play allows adults to learn their child's body language.** Knowing when you should incorporate yourself in your child's play is key.

9. **Play teaches adults patience and understanding.** If you do choose to join in your child's play make sure that you do not try to take it over and force incorporation of your ultimate learning objectives into their play. Structured adult-led activities have their time and place but remember to allow for time for children to control and decide their own play.
10. **Play is fun.** Learning to play well, both by themselves and with others, sets children up to be contented and sociable.
- + 1. **Kids grow up way too fast! Put down phones, stop the crazy hustle and bustle of life, and play!**



**Upcoming Events:**

March 9 Kindergarten Round Up 4 and 6 pm informational meetings in the Elementary Library

March 10 PTA Library Night 6:00-7:15, PTA meeting to follow.

March 20 No School Teacher Comp Day

March 23 No School Teacher Workshop