



THUNDERBIRD NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2025

Welcome Back to the 2025-2026 School Year!



Volume 19

Issue 1

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SUPERINTENDENT MONTHLY UPDATE

BY JON ROTHER

Each new school year brings with it the excitement of what is to come! We have some new faces on staff, new students, staff in new roles and some new work done to the schools. I'm sure the kids will come to school with some fresh hair cuts, new shoes and school supplies. And, most will be a little taller!

Board Update

Building Bond - The board has been busy discussing what future facilities will look like for the JCC district. Options being discussed:

- Pursue a bond to build a PK-6 building on the proposed 52 acres in Tecumseh and consolidate 7-12 programming in the current high school.
- Pursue a bond to build a PK-8 building on the proposed 52 acres in Tecumseh, leaving the current high school for 9-12 programming.
 - *Both the above options would result in closing the Cook site. We would look to sell the facilities to be repurposed, or would look to have them demolished to avoid paying for the upkeep of the buildings.*
- Pursue a bond to build on the current Tecumseh site. The Cook site would be closed. The elementary in Tecumseh would be demolished allowing space for new construction. All PK-12 programming would be at the current Tecumseh location, keeping the high school while making new additions.
 - Close the Tecumseh site elementary; move all PK-3 student programming to the Cook Site.
 - Close the Cook site; move all programming to the current Tecumseh site. This would require renovations to the current Tecumseh site buildings.

There are pros and cons to each of these options. Some are monetary, some are logistical. In the end, we want to do what is best for the students in our district and make decisions for facilities that will allow students to grow and learn in a safe environment.

If you have thoughts, opinions or questions about the discussions on the future of the facilities at JCC, please feel free to contact me or any of the JCC school board members.

- Kim Wellensiek, JCC School Board President
- kim.wellensiek@jcccentral.org
- Justin Beethe, JCC School Board Vice President
- justin.beethe@jcccentral.org
- Gail Hutt, Board Member
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- Dan Jones, Board Member
- dan.jones@jcccentral.org
- Jon Schmid, Board Member
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- Sarah Weber, Board Member
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- Jon Rother, Superintendent
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Facilities Upgrades

- The high school gym floor was resurfaced and redesigned.
- Work has begun on installing a sprinkler system in the high school.
- A hood vent was installed in the high school kitchen. This seems simple, however it is quite extensive as it has to tie into safety systems, needs appropriate ventilation and ties into the water system.
- A temporary chiller was installed at the Cook site. This will need to get replaced with a permanent chiller.
- The carpet in the Cook site library was replaced.
- LED lights were installed in the High School shop spaces.

Future Facilities Upgrades - The High School in Tecumseh has several upcoming projects that will require “dropping the ceiling”. This means the ceiling grids and tiles will need to be taken down, and possibly replaced, for the work to be done.

These include the HVAC system replacement, the sprinkler system addition and upgrading the communications systems. “Dropping the ceiling” one time to complete all the work will help to keep costs down. This means that the work being done for each project will need to be coordinated.

- A Request For Proposals (RFP) is being developed for the chiller replacement at the Cook site.
- A Request For Proposals (RFP) is being developed to replace the HVAC (Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning) in the High School.
- The sprinkler system in the High School is expected to be completed in the summer of 2026.
- The communications system in the high school is planned to be done in the summer of 2026. The communications system will tie into the safety and security systems (doors, fire alarms, sprinkler systems, etc.).
- The Cook site kitchen hood vent is expected to be completed in the summer of 2026.
- Door, and possibly window, replacements for the High School are a planned project as well.

New Policy & Handbook Update

Cell Phones

Cell phones and digital communication devices must be off and stored in student educational lockers or left in vehicles.

Smart watches may be worn as long as students are not using them for communication purposes.

Consequences for using cell phones during school hours involve the cell phone/device being taken to the office. The second offense will result in the parent/guardian being required to retrieve the phone/device from the school office. The third offense will result in the phone needing to be left in the student's car/home, or the student can check their phone in to the office.

Extracurricular (Random) Drug Testing Program

Changes are being considered that would require parents to pay for all drug testing after a set number of positive test results by their student. At the time of this publication, this policy is still under review.



2025-2026 School Lunch Prices

The school meal program serves to provide nutritious meals for all our students. Meals must be paid in advance. You can pay for meals at any JCC office or by using the online payment option, <https://www.schoolpay.com/>

In order to use SchoolPay, you will be asked to first set up an account.
Should you need help with this, please contact us at the school.

Breakfast - \$2.35 (reduced price \$0.30)
PK-5 Lunch - \$3.60 (reduced price \$0.40)
6-12 Lunch - \$3.60 (reduced price \$0.40)
Student a la Carte - \$2.10
Milk - \$0.55
Juice - \$0.60

**Free/Reduced meal forms can be found at any JCC school office or on our website.*



If you have not received a letter to let you know your lunch status for this year – as of OCTOBER 7th – you will go to FULL PAY.

Please remember that IF you were free or reduced last year due to direct certification, or income eligibility this DOES NOT mean that the status is the same this year – so if you have NOT received a letter in the mail – you WILL be FULL pay as of OCTOBER 7th.

If you have questions please call ASAP so that we do not run into delinquent lunch statuses.

– Kendra Gottula 402.335.3320

Johnson County Central's Community

Tailgate Bonfire Pep Rally

***Sunday
September
14***

***High School
Football Field
6:00 PM***



High School News

BY JUSTIN DAMME

I hope you have had an enjoyable summer and are ready for a great 2024-25 school year. Here are a couple of items to inform you on to get started for the new school year:

PowerSchool ECollect

As part of our sustainability initiative, we are transitioning to online forms when with PowerSchool ECollect. Forms such as demographics, student contact information, etc. will be completed online. The anticipated start date is August 1st. If you do not have a parent PowerSchool account, parents and guardians are encouraged to contact the office staff at your student's building to create an account.

OPEN HOUSE

We encourage students and parents of high school students to attend our Open House on Thursday, August 7, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

- Get set up in PowerSchool
- Turn in important documents for the school year
- Meet the teachers and go through your class schedule
- Get important reminders of where information will be shared
- Ask Questions to Administration

CLASS SCHEDULES

All students should have received their pre registration letter and schedule in the mail. Please review your classes for the 2025-2026 school year.

If you would like to make some changes, you can meet with Mrs. Reuter (counselor) on Tuesday, August 5th, anytime between 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Or during Open House on August 7th 6:00-7:00 p.m.

Remember, you also have five school days to change classes after school starts (from Monday, August 11th through Tuesday, August 19th).

IPADS

All high school students will receive their iPad on the first day of school as long as you have the insurance form filled out and paid, and the policy and procedure form signed and returned to the office.

We strongly encourage students to take care of this before school starts. You can come to the high school office anytime between 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for forms and payment or use our online ecollect form on PowerSchool.

If students have completed these instructions, they will get their iPad on the first day of school without any delay.

High School News continued on Page 6

HANDBOOKS

I will be visiting with each class going over the Student Handbook and Activities Handbook for the next week and a half. All students received an email of a copy of these handbooks on their iPad.

Please take the time to view these handbooks at your convenience and return the receipts that are required. This can be done on PowerSchool or at the office.

During these meetings I will also have information for our ACT prep for any students interested.

SCHOOL PICTURE DAY

Our school picture day is scheduled for Friday, August 29th, 2025.

CELL PHONE POLICY UPDATE

Cell Phones, Earbuds and Other Electronic Devices

Students may not use cell phones, earbuds or other electronic devices while at school, except as permitted in this handbook.

Students may use cell phones, earbuds or other electronic devices on the school sidewalks and in the common areas of the school before and after school, so long as they do not create a distraction or a disruption. Students may not use cell phones or other electronic devices while they are in locker rooms, restrooms or any place where there is an expectation of personal privacy. During the school day, cell phones must be powered off and left in student hallway lockers as designated by the building principal. Cell phones may not be stored in student athletic lockers during the school day. Smartwatches may be worn, but cannot be used for communication purposes. Students who need to have electronic devices in order to monitor health conditions will continue to follow their individualized plans.

Students may use cell phones, earbuds or other electronic devices while riding in a school vehicle unless the vehicle's driver has explicitly prohibited use for safety or disciplinary reasons.

Students are personally and solely responsible for the security of their cell phones, earbuds and other electronic devices. The school district is not responsible for theft, loss, or damage of a cell phone or earbuds or any calls made on a cell phone.

If a student possesses or uses a cell phone, earbuds or other electronic devices during the school day the following sequence of consequences will be applied.

2025-2026 School Calendar

July 2025									
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa			
		1	2	3	4	5			
6	7	8	9	10	11	12			
13	14	15	16	17	18	19			
20	21	22	23	24	25	26			
27	28	29	30	31					

July
4 Independence day

August 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
				7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

August	
6-8	Teacher In-Service
11	NSAA Official Start of Fall Practice
11	First Day For Students - 1:00 PM Dismissal
15	Teacher In-Service
19	First Day For Preschool
25	Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students.
Student Days = 12, Teacher Days = 17	

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

September	
1	Labor Day - NO SCHOOL
8	Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students.
22	Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students.
Student Days = 17	
Teacher Days = 19	

October 2025							Sa
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
			1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
26	27	28	29	30	31		

October	
6	NO SCHOOL Parent-Teacher Conferences 11 AM - 7 PM
10	End 1st Quarter
20	Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students. Student Days = 19 Teacher Days = 21
	Total 1st Qtr. Student Days = 36
	Total 1st Qtr. Teacher Days = 44

November 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

November	
3	Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students.
17	Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students.
26-28	NO SCHOOL - Thanksgiving Break

Student Days = 14
Teacher Days = 16

December 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

December	
1	Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students.
19	NO SCHOOL for students/End 2nd Quarter/1st Semester
19	Teacher Work-Day/JCC Wrestling Invite
22-31	NO SCHOOL - Winter Break
24-28	NSAA Winter Moratorium
	Student Days = 12
	Teacher Days = 14

January 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

January	
1	New Year's Day
5	Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students.
19	Martin Luther King Jr. Day
19	Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students.
Student Days = 16	
Teacher Days = 18	

February 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

February	
2	ESU4 Engaging Educators Conf. - NO SCHOOL.
14	Valentines Day
16	NO SCHOOL Parent-Teacher Conferences
Student Days = 16 Teacher Days = 18	

March 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

March	
2	Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students.
13	End 3rd Quarter
16	Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students.
	Student Days = 18 Teacher Days = 20
	Total 3rd Qtr. Student Days = 40
	Total 3rd Qtr. Teacher Days = 45

April 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

April	
3-6	NO SCHOOL - Easter Break
13	Teacher In-Service - NO SCHOOL for students.
20	NO SCHOOL for students - District Music
	Student Days = 17
	Teacher Days = 19

May 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
				7	8	9
3	4	5	6			
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

May	
9	JCC High School Graduation
13	Last Day for 3-year old Preschool
14	NO SCHOOL for students - District Track
21	Last Day for Students - 11 AM Dismissal
	End 4th Quarter/2nd Semester
22	Teacher In-Service
Total 4th Qtr. Student Days = 40, Teacher Days = 45	

June 2026									
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa			
	1	2	3	4	5	6			
7	8	9	10	11	12	13			
14	15	16	17	18	19	20			
21	22	23	24	25	26	27			
28	29	30							

June
2025-2026 TOTAL = 154 Student Days
2025-2026 TOTAL = 177 Teacher Days

Total 2nd Qtr. Student Days = 38

Thunderbird Golf Classic 2025

**Saturday, September 27
Tecumseh Country Club
9:00 AM**



**Person
Scramble**

**Contact
Ben Swanson (402) 921-0870**

Cook Site Update

BY MARSHA BACON

As always, I find myself getting excited as the first day of school approaches. I greatly enjoy seeing students after a summer of relaxation and activities- seeing how much they change and grow in just a few short months!

Welcome to the 25-26 School Year!

New staff members at the Cook site include:

Mrs. Skye Grafton: Middle School Special Education

Mr. Keaton Kleepies: Middle School Social Studies, coaching football and basketball

Mrs. Brianna Pfeiffer: 7th & 8th Grade Reading

Mr. Timothy Hedger: 4-8 School Counselor, head varsity volleyball coach

Mrs. Jill Jensen: Registered Nurse and grades 4 & 5 administrative assistant

Mark Your Calendar: Walk-Through & Open House Wednesday, August 6th at 6:00 PM

Join us for our annual Walk-Through and Open House! This important event helps ensure a smooth transition into the new school year!

- **6th-8th Grade Students:** Start in the main gym
- **4th & 5th Grade Students:** Go directly to your classroom

What to Expect:

- Receive your 2025-2026 class schedules
- Visit each classroom for approximately 5 minutes
- Meet teachers and learn about class expectations
- Find lockers and get familiar with the building
- Complete necessary forms

Important Details pertaining to the 1:1 iPad program for 6-8 students: All 6th-8th grade students will receive an iPad for the school year. There are 3 options for parents to choose. Selected option determines if the iPad stays at school or if the student is able to take it home.

- iPad insurance forms will be distributed at the Walk-Through
- iPads will be checked out during the first week of school (insurance form and payment required)

- Cord and charger are optional for home use
- Initial orientation will be covered at the Walk-Through

Middle School Parents & Guardians can bring the following to the Walk-Through:

- Lunch money (advance payment required)
- Activity fees
- iPad insurance fees
- Instrumental rental fees

Please bring separate checks for each account or pay online through SchoolPay.

Additional Information:

- Free & Reduced lunch applications will be available
- JCC staff will assist with online forms after the walk-through

Handbook Update for the 25-26 School Year

I wanted to share with parents a portion of the updated student handbook that states the new cell phone policy for the 25-26 school year:

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Students may use cell phones, earbuds or other electronic devices while riding in a school vehicle unless the

vehicle's driver has explicitly prohibited use for safety or disciplinary reasons.

Students are personally and solely responsible for the security of their cell phones, earbuds and other electronic devices. The school district is not responsible for theft, loss, or damage of a cell phone or earbuds or any calls made on a cell phone.

If a student possesses or uses a cell phone, earbuds or other electronic devices during the school day the following sequence of consequences will be applied.

PowerSchool ECollect

As part of our sustainability initiative, we are transitioning to online forms when with PowerSchool ECollect. Forms such as demographics, student contact information, etc. will be completed online. The anticipated start date is August 1st.

If you do not have a parent PowerSchool account, parents and guardians are encouraged to contact the office staff at your student's building to create an account.

Other important Information and Reminders:

For ALL 7th-12th Grade NSAA Activity Participants:

- **Parental Consent Form** must be signed and returned before any practice or competition
- Available at Middle School office, High School office, or www.jccentral.org

Physical Examinations Required:

- **7th Grade:** ALL students need a school physical
- **8th-12th Grade:** Students participating in athletics need a physician's certificate

- Physical must be completed during the current school year or preceding summer

- **Important:** No practice allowed until forms are submitted

Immunization Update: All 7th grade students must have up-to-date immunizations.

School Supplies:

- Middle school recommended supplies listed in summer newsletter
- 4th & 5th grade lists were sent home with spring report cards
- All lists available on school website under "Parent Information"

Dress Code Reminder: Please review the Student-Parent Handbook for dress code guidelines as you shop for back-to-school clothes.

Middle school is an exciting time for growth, friendship, and discovery! I encourage all students to start the school year with an open mind toward their classes and to take advantage of the opportunity to try as many activities as possible. This is the best way for students to learn about themselves, strengthen friendships, create connections with peers and have a positive school experience. We are looking forward to partnering with students and families for another successful and productive school year!

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Middle School @ (402)-864-4181. Hope to see everyone August 6th!

**More information about items included in this article, including student handbooks, can be found on the school website: www.jccentral.org*



Welcome Back to School Greetings From the Elementary!



Welcome to an exciting new school year at Johnson County Central! I am thrilled to be here as your Elementary Principal. This will be my thirteenth year as a Thunderbird, and I am ready to support you and your child in this new role. As we get ready for the first day, please note the following important details and dates listed below.

Parents, when talking to your child about the start of school, remember to show your support for their educational journey. Discuss school in a positive light and establish clear expectations for behavior and homework. Ensure they go to bed at a good time and have a healthy breakfast in the morning. Remember, this is a partnership. The staff and I at Johnson County Central are committed to working with you and your child to help them have a successful year. It's a great day to be a Thunderbird!

New Teachers

- Ms. Jami Gabriel will be the new Kindergarten teacher, replacing Mrs. Maggie Badertscher, who is now part of our second-grade team.
- Ms. Zadie Plager is teaching 3rd grade this year. She was previously a long-term substitute at the middle school.

Paperwork

- Please ensure that you have completed all necessary physicals and have up-to-date shot records.
- Meals and milk snacks are to be paid in advance.
- Complete all the necessary paperwork and registration forms, including contact information.

Important Dates

- **Thursday, August 7:** Please join us for our Tecumseh Site Open House starting at 6:00 p.m.
- **Monday, August 11:** First Day of School! We will dismiss at 1:00 p.m. on this day.
- **Friday, August 15:** Teacher In-service, no school for students
- **Monday, August 18:** No School.
- **Tuesday, August 19:** First Day of School for Preschool Students.
- **Monday, August 25:** Teacher In-service, no school for students.
- **Friday, August 29:** School Picture Day!
- Morning Supervision outside in front of the school begins at **7:30 a.m.**
- Breakfast starts at **7:15 a.m.**
- The school day begins at **8:00 a.m.** and ends at **3:50 p.m.**

Contact Info:

Please feel free to contact me at anytime during the school year
email: beckie.robeson@jccentral.org phone: 402-335-7839

Journey Together...Creating Opportunities...Committed to Excellence

JCC OPEN HOUSES

**COOK SITE: WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6TH
BEGINS AT 6 P.M.**

**STUDENTS GRADES 4 & 5 GO TO CLASSROOMS
MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS GO TO THE GYM**

**TECUMSEH SITE: THURSDAY, AUGUST 7TH
BEGINS AT 6 P.M.**

**HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS GO TO THE GYM
ELEMENTARY STUDENTS GO TO CLASSROOMS**

**OPEN HOUSES PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO FIND
THEIR CLASSROOMS, MEET WITH THEIR TEACHERS, FIND THEIR
LOCKERS AND ALLEVIATE SOME OF THE ANXIETY THAT STUDENTS
MAY FEEL ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.**

LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AT THE OPEN HOUSES!

**CREATE POWERSCHOOL
PARENT ACCOUNT!**



**PICK UP FORMS FOR
YOUR STUDENTS!**

Greetings Thunderbird Family

I hope all of you had a fantastic summer and got some much needed down time and time with your friends and family. I know our student-athletes have been working hard this summer and are excited to show you their improvements in their respective field of competition.

Speaking of competition, we are only a few quick weeks away from the first competition dates. But before that, practice begins. First official HS fall practices will begin on Monday, August 11th. Before athletes can practice they need to have the proper paperwork turned into the office. There is more on that detailed below. Please contact the school if there are any questions.

Listed below are the fall coaches for the upcoming school year. There have been a few changes and we are excited to have some new people coaching! They will be great additions for our athletes.

Fall Coaches 2025-26

Cross Country: Nick Weber, Angela Huskey

Girls Golf: Ben Swanson

Football: Ryan Haughton, Neil Bowman, Brad Gabriel, Lance Beethe, Keaton Kleespies, Jon Rother

Volleyball: Tim Hedger, Cody Franklin, Leah Phillips, Anna Gyhra

Junior High Football: Keaton Kleespies, Aaron Turner

Junior High Volleyball: Ashley Juilfs, Zadie Plager, Jami Gabriel

Cheerleading: Andrea Jaquez, Amber Baehr

Please reach out to a coach and tell them thank you for all the time they put in and sacrifices that they make to help our athletes be successful!

Good luck to our athletes and coaches as we get started on this upcoming season! Go Thunderbirds!

Garrett Collin



****IMPORTANT INFORMATION****

Each student, grades 7-12, who plan to participate in NSAA sponsored activities during the upcoming school year will need to turn in a signed Parental Consent form. This must be done before a student is eligible for practice and competition in any activity that is under the jurisdiction of the Nebraska School Activities Association. The participating student and one of his/her parents or guardians must sign the certificate of consent and turn this certificate into the school office. By signing this consent form parents and students acknowledge that they understand there are risks involved in any activity. This parental consent form must be on file at school for every student who participates in NSAA activities.

All 7th grade students and each 8th – 12th grade student who expects to participate in athletics this year will need to turn in a physician's certificate stating that he/she is physically fit for athletic participation. We do encourage any students who have a medical history (recent surgery or concussion, heart issue, etc...) to get a Pre-Participation Athletic Physical if possible, even if they are exempt this year. All incoming freshmen and 7th graders will still be required to provide the school with the Pre-Participation Physical Examination paperwork that is dated no earlier than May 1, 2025.

CONCUSSION INFORMATION

The [Nebraska Concussion Awareness Act](#) was signed into law Governor Heineman in April, 2012. The bill affects any schools having athletes 19 years old or younger, as well as any sports organization, including youth leagues, club sports, or any organization sponsoring a sporting activity where there is a cost to participants or where such costs are sponsored.

There are 3 primary components to the Nebraska Concussion Awareness Act:

1. **Education** – (a) concussion educational training must be made available to all coaches on how to recognize symptoms of a concussion, and how to seek proper medical treatment. (b) Athletes and parents must be provided concussion information prior to an athlete's participation on an annual basis that includes (i) signs & symptoms of a concussion, (ii) risks posed by sustaining a concussion, and (iii) actions an athlete should take in response to sustaining a concussion – including informing their coaches.
2. **Removal of Athlete** – an athlete presenting with signs or symptoms of a concussion thereby being “reasonably suspected” of having sustained a concussion (a) must be removed from participation, and (b) may not return to participation until evaluated by appropriate licensed health care professional, *and*,
3. **Written & Signed Clearance for Return to Play (RTP)** – an athlete having been removed from participation for the purpose of presenting with signs or symptoms or “reasonably suspected” of having sustained a concussion must have, before RTP or participation is allowed by a coach, (a) written and signed clearance from an appropriate licensed health care professional, and (b) written and signed clearance from the athlete's parents.

This law has changed the way concussions have been handled in the past. Schools/Organizations must notify a parent of a concussed athlete of the date and time of the head injury, the observed signs & symptoms, and action taken. Schools/Organizations will need to have concussion educational information readily available, and they must demand written clearance for RTP from a licensed health care professional and parent for any concussed athlete. Schools should anticipate the number of concussions, if appropriately “recognized”, to increase significantly; on average, 10% of athletes in a contact or collision sport, and 15%-20% of FB players. Coaches will not only have a duty, but will be required to know the “Signs and Symptoms” of a concussion, and will be responsible for “recognizing” concussions and the potential for head injury. Coaches will have to remove any such athlete “reasonably suspected” of having sustained a concussion, and not allow that athlete to RTP without the athlete first being evaluated by an appropriate licensed health care professional, and without the athlete having written clearance from both a licensed health care professional and parent.

So what’s the reality of it? The most difficulty in complying with this law will be the understanding of what is considered a concussion by coaches and parents. The most painful aspect for coaches dealing with concussions will be: “a ding is a concussion”. An athlete that got “dinged” or had their “bell rung” is very likely to present with fairly recognizable signs and symptoms and is to be considered having sustained a concussion - regardless at what point the signs and symptoms may clear. Another point is, RTP of a concussed athlete will be essentially out of the hands of a coach, if at any point there are any signs or symptoms, or one is “reasonably suspected” of sustaining a concussion. No longer can there be any reasoning or judgment on the part of a coach, or parent, as to how minor or severe a concussion might be as to when a coach might think it’s OK for an athlete to RTP – RTP will be solely restricted to a licensed health care professional’s decision. It will be prohibitive for an athlete presenting with signs or symptoms in a game, even briefly, to RTP within the same game, and may become a rarity for an athlete concussed in a Friday night FB game to return for the following week’s game.

Conversely, an athlete could essentially resume play, provided an appropriate assessment was made where no such findings were apparent to a coach. Removal, evaluation by a licensed health care professional, and written clearance are necessary in the event “signs and symptoms” were present or a concussion was “reasonably suspected”. Finally, asking an athlete “Are you OK, can you go?” will no longer be an appropriate means to assess their condition. Coaches will need to follow an appropriate method of sideline assessment for recognizing potential concussions.
[Adapted from the Nebraska Sports Concussion Network website]

A Parent’s Guide to Concussion in Sports

Taken from the NSAA website and the National Federation of State High School Associations

What is a concussion?

• A concussion is a brain injury which results in a temporary disruption of normal brain function. A concussion occurs when the brain is violently rocked back and forth or twisted inside the skull as a result of a blow to the head or body. An athlete does not have to lose consciousness (“knocked out”) to suffer a concussion.

Concussion Facts

- It is estimated that over 140,000 high school athletes across the United States suffer a concussion each year. (Data from NFHS Injury Surveillance System)
- Concussions occur most frequently in football, but girls’ lacrosse, girls’ soccer, boys’ lacrosse, wrestling and girls’ basketball follow closely behind. All athletes are at risk.
- A concussion is a traumatic injury to the brain.
- Concussion symptoms may last from a few days to several months.
- Concussions can cause symptoms which interfere with school, work, and social life.
- An athlete should not return to sports while still having symptoms from a concussion as they are at risk for prolonging symptoms and further injury.
- A concussion may cause multiple symptoms. Many symptoms appear immediately after the injury, while others may develop over the next several days or weeks. The symptoms may be subtle and are often difficult to fully recognize.

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS, FRIENDS, TEACHERS OR COACHES	SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE
Appears dazed or stunned	Headache
Is confused about what to do	Nausea
Forgets plays	Balance problems or dizziness
Is unsure of game, score, or opponent	Double or fuzzy vision

Moves clumsily	Sensitivity to light or noise
Answers questions slowly	Feeling sluggish
Loses consciousness	Feeling foggy or groggy
Shows behavior or personality changes	Concentration or memory problems
Can't recall events prior to hit	Confusion
Can't recall events after hit	Confusion

What should I do if I think my child has had a concussion?

If an athlete is suspected of having a concussion, he or she must be immediately removed from play, be it a game or practice. Continuing to participate in physical activity after a concussion can lead to worsening concussion symptoms, increased risk for further injury, and even death. Parents and coaches are not expected to be able to “diagnose” a concussion, as that is the job of a medical professional. However, you must be aware of the signs and symptoms of a concussion and if you are suspicious, then your child must stop playing:

When in doubt, sit them out!

All athletes who sustain a concussion need to be evaluated by a health care professional who is familiar with sports concussions. You should call your child's physician and explain what has happened and follow your physician's instructions. If your child is vomiting, has a severe headache, is having difficulty staying awake or answering simple questions he or she should be taken to the emergency room immediately.

When can an athlete return to play following a concussion?

After suffering a concussion, no athlete should return to play or practice on that same day. Previously, athletes were allowed to return to play if their symptoms resolved within 15 minutes of the injury. Studies have shown us that the young brain does not recover quickly enough for an athlete to return to activity in such a short time. Concerns over athletes returning to play too quickly have led state lawmakers to pass laws stating that no player shall return to play following a concussion on that same day and the athlete must be cleared by an appropriate health-care professional before he or she is allowed to return to play in games or practices. The laws also state that concussion educational training must be made available to all coaches on how to recognize symptoms of a concussion, and how to seek proper medical treatment.

Once an athlete no longer has symptoms of a concussion and is cleared to return to play by a health care professional knowledgeable in the care of sports concussions he or she should proceed with activity in a step-wise fashion to allow the brain to re-adjust to exertion. On average the athlete will complete a new step each day. The return to play schedule should proceed as below following medical clearance:

Step 1: Light exercise, including walking or riding an exercise bike. No weightlifting.

Step 2: Running in the gym or on the field. No helmet or other equipment.

Step 3: Non-contact training drills in full equipment. Weight-training can begin.

Step 4: Full contact practice or training.

Step 5: Game play.

If symptoms occur at any step, the athlete should cease activity and be reevaluated by their health care provider.

How can a concussion affect schoolwork?

Following a concussion, many athletes will have difficulty in school. These problems may last from days to months and often involve difficulties with short and long-term memory, concentration, and organization.

In many cases it is best to lessen the athlete's class load early on after the injury. This may include staying home from school for a few days, followed by a lightened schedule for a few days, or perhaps a longer period of time, if needed. Decreasing the stress on the brain early on after a concussion may lessen symptoms and shorten the recovery time.

Just remember:

- A concussion is a brain injury and all are serious.
- Most concussions occur without loss of consciousness.
- Recognition and proper response to concussions when they first occur can help prevent serious injury or even death.

Although sports-related concussions are in the news, a concussion can also occur from a fall or a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. Health care professionals may describe a concussion as a "mild" brain injury because concussions are usually not life-threatening. Even so, their effects can be serious.

A concussion, no matter how mild it may seem at the time, is a brain injury. We know from studies that a concussion disrupts the brain on a cellular level. It challenges the balance between chemicals within the cell (potassium) and chemicals outside the cell (calcium). As a result, the brain cell, whose job is to efficiently supply the brain with fuel (glucose), is compromised. The more demand placed on the brain for fuel, the more potential for the student to flare with symptoms (Giza & Hovda, 2001).

Immediately after a concussion, the simplest physical or mental demand can bring about severe symptoms. Within a few days, the brain cells begin to heal themselves; therefore, light cognitive activity may still flare symptoms, yet symptoms are usually short-lived and respond well to intermittent periods of rest.

Physical and cognitive rest is the best intervention for healing the brain cells. In the first few days, sleeping as much as possible has the highest yield. The rule of thumb is that if a student is physically or mentally exerting to the point of flaring a symptom, then physical/mental activity should be cut back. One size does not fit all in severity of concussion and amount of time for recovery.

Since a concussion is a medical event, and its recovery spans the home and school setting for several weeks, the management of the concussion is best accomplished by a seamless system of communication and collaboration among parents, the school, and the healthcare providers (McAvoy, 2009).

This multidisciplinary team approach to concussion management lends itself to consensus decision-making. It is best practice that the concussed student always returns to school with a signed release of information in place allowing for two-way communication between the school and the healthcare provider.

What can I do?

- Both you and your child should learn to recognize the "Signs and Symptoms" of concussion as listed above.
- Teach your child to tell the coaching staff if he or she experiences such symptoms.
- Emphasize to administrators, coaches, teachers, and other parents your concerns and expectations about concussion and safe play.
- Teach your child to tell the coaching staff if he or she suspects that a teammate has a concussion.
- Monitor sports equipment for safety, fit, and maintenance.
- Ask teachers to monitor any decrease in grades or changes in behavior that could indicate concussion.
- Report concussions that occurred during the school year to appropriate school staff. This will help in monitoring injured athletes as they move to the next season's sports.

Johnson County Central Schools: Continuous Improvement Process

District Goal: ‘Improving Student Learning Through a Growth Mindset’

Johnson County Central Schools (JCC) has centered its school improvement efforts on enhancing student engagement and learning by fostering a growth mindset. The district adopted the goal to “**Improve Student Learning Through a Growth Mindset**” during the 2021-2022 school year. This initiative aims to help students understand that their abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work, which is foundational to increasing student achievement.

Growth Mindset Implementation

- **Staff Development**: All staff, including support staff, read *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* by Carol Dweck. After each chapter, staff engaged in group discussions and interactive lessons to deepen their understanding and share strategies.
- **Classroom Strategies**: Teachers integrated growth mindset principles into their instruction and classroom expectations, helping students link effort to success.
- **Impact**: Staff noted improvements in both teaching strategies and personal interactions, extending the growth mindset philosophy to their families.

During the Continuous Improvement Process (CIP) JCC transitioned from AdvancedED Nebraska Framework in 2017. The Nebraska Framework guided the district’s last continuous improvement process, culminating in a school visitation in March 2021. During the last visitation cycle, and prior to the 2022-23 school years, Nebraska Multi-Tiered Systems and Supports (NeMTSS) and the school improvement process were considered to be two separate processes. During the 2022-23 school year, the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) revised the processes for the Nebraska Framework and NeMTSS problem-solving model. NDE developed the Nebraska Continuous Improvement (CIP) plan which combined Nebraska Framework and NeMTSS.

Upon the conclusion of the 2021 school visitation, the main recommendation for Johnson County Central Schools was to formalize the MTSS process for the district. JCC has made many improvements integrating NeMTSS since the 2021 school year.

Integration of NeMTSS and CIP: Following recommendations, JCC formalized the MTSS process across all district buildings, using student data and the annual AQuESST report to identify areas for improvement.

- Each building completes a NeMTSS self-assessment in the spring.
- The district makes data-driven decisions. JCC invested in EduClimber, a data warehouse, to collect and analyze student data, guiding instructional strategies and interventions.

AQuESTT: Nebraska’s Accountability System

AQuESTT (Accountability for a Quality Education System, Today and Tomorrow) is Nebraska’s school accountability framework, consisting of six tenets. Through the school improvement process, JCC has focused on strengthening each area. Examples of each tenet include:

1. Positive Partnerships, Relationships & Student Success

- Family engagement through formal communication and success planning including the creation of individual learning plans and 504 plans when needed.
- Community partnerships and volunteer opportunities
- Regular MTSS meetings and data sharing via EduClimber.
- Collaboration with local officials for student support.
- Offering more student success programs such as Reading Buddies, Art Club, BUDS, unified sports, etc.
- Partnerships with local colleges for dual-credit college courses.
- Community access to facilities including the weight-room.

2. Transitions

- Graduation Planner implementation (PowerSchool, 2025-26)
- Orientation programs for transitions between buildings and grade levels
- Open Houses for all grades
- Transitional documentation for grades K-5
- Title 1 information nights and multi-level coaching support

3. Educational Opportunities and Access

- Campus visits and career planning for middle and high school students
- Free ACT preparation and testing support
- Dual-credit courses (district pays for two classes/year plus books)
- Technology integration: 1:1 iPads for K-12, computer literacy, and coding classes
- Additional opportunities: Drivers education, CNA classes, college fairs, and online credit recovery

4. College & Career Ready

- Advanced coursework in English, Math, Science, Art, and Welding
- Dual-credit classes in various subjects
- Career education resources: EducationQuest, Nebraska Career Connections, CharacterStrong
- Career exploration and strengths inventories starting in middle school
- Business and community speaker events

5. Student Assessment

- Participation in MAP (K-11), NSCAS (3-8), ACT (11), PSAT (10), ASVAB (juniors), Star (1-8), Wonders, and Envision Math assessments
- Formative and summative classroom assessments
- Alignment with state standards for lesson planning and growth evaluation

6. Educator Effectiveness

- Ongoing professional development at no cost to staff
- Support for staff leadership and growth
- Mentor/mentee orientation program for new staff
- Participation in workshops and training from ESU, NDE, and NSAA

Johnson County Central Schools demonstrates a strong commitment to continuous improvement, focusing on student engagement, achievement, and readiness for future challenges. The district's integration of growth mindset principles, data-driven decision-making, and comprehensive support for both students and staff ensures ongoing progress and educational excellence.



JOHNSON COUNTY CENTRAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PARTNERSHIP PACKAGES



We are excited to offer your business an opportunity to showcase your school and community support while taking advantage of prime advertising during every game. But your support goes beyond game night. Your sponsorship also contributes to:

ACADEMICS



students can get hands-on experience beyond the classroom

ACTIVITIES



band, cheer and student government can all see benefits from your sponsorship

BUDGET



your business can help pay for the video board itself, and add to school funds

ATHLETES



students get pumped up when they see themselves in lights

GAIN THE HOME-FIELD/COURT ADVANTAGE PARTNER WITH JOHNSON COUNTY CENTRAL HIGH

- 1 Stimulate sales
- 2 Increase brand loyalty
- 3 Drive traffic to your business
- 4 Create brand awareness and visibility
- 5 Set yourself apart from the competition
- 6 Show support for our community and students
- 7 Help keep athletic programs healthy and competitive
- 8 Enhance the fan experience and leave a positive impression about your business and our team
- 9 Reach local and out-of-town customers more effectively

CONTACT INFORMATION

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JOHNSON COUNTY CENTRAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP PACKAGES

FOUNDING PARTNERSHIP (4 TOTAL, \$7,500/YEAR)

STATIC SIGNAGE

One (1) logo on an ad panel on side of the outdoor video board, approximate size TBD.

One (1) logo on an ad panel above or below a scoreboard in the gym, approximate size TBD

OUTDOOR DIGITAL CONTENT

PRE-IN-POST GAME rotating business name, logo, and/or tagline on video display. Messages will rotate with other partners for each regular season home event.

Two (2) in-game full screen static ad exposure per regular season home event

One (1) quarter of first down sponsorships per every home varsity football game. Sponsor logo will play on the Eagle's first down graphic on the video board for a whole quarter. Sponsors will each take one of the four quarters.

One (1) :30 second IN-game sponsor supplied video commercial OR full color logo with corresponding announcement per regular season home varsity game

MULTI-MEDIA/PRINT/PROMOTIONS

One (1) grouped PA announcement at all home varsity events (boys and girls)

One (1) ad exposure on the JCC athletics live stream per regular season varsity event

PROMOTIONAL GAME SPONSORSHIP

One (1) game day sponsorship per year. School and sponsor will choose (1) home indoor varsity game per year. Game day sponsorship could include:

- Additional PA announcement and digital content recognizing sponsor
- Opportunity for promotional giveaway or contest
- Opportunity to promote or distribute specialty items
- On field recognition

INDOOR DIGITAL CONTENT

PRE-IN-POST GAME rotating business name, logo, and/or tagline on video display. Messages will rotate with other partners for each regular season home event.

One (1) in-game full screen static ad exposure per regular season home event

One (1) :30 second IN-game sponsor supplied video commercial OR full color logo with corresponding announcement per regular season home varsity game

One (1) in game sponsor feature entitlement per home varsity basketball or volleyball game. Sponsor logo can play on animated graphics such as National Anthem, Starting Lineups, Halftime, Timeout, etc.





JOHNSON COUNTY CENTRAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP PACKAGES

ANCHOR PARTNERSHIP (6 TOTAL, \$3,500/YEAR)

OUTDOOR DIGITAL CONTENT

PRE-IN-POST GAME rotating business name, logo, and/or tagline on video display. Messages will rotate with other partners for each regular season home event.

Two (2) in-game full screen static ad exposure per regular season home event

One (1) :30 second PRE-game sponsor supplied video commercial OR full color logo with corresponding announcement per regular season home varsity game

PROMOTIONAL GAME SPONSORSHIP

One (1) game day sponsorship per year. School and sponsor will choose (1) home indoor varsity game per year. Game day sponsorship could include:

- Additional PA announcement and digital content recognizing sponsor
- Opportunity for promotional giveaway or contest
- Opportunity to promote or distribute specialty items
- On field recognition

MULTI-MEDIA/PRINT/PROMOTIONS

One (1) grouped PA announcement at all home varsity events (boys and girls)

One (1) ad exposure on the JCC athletics live stream per regular season varsity event

INDOOR DIGITAL CONTENT

PRE-IN-POST GAME rotating business name, logo, and/or tagline on video display. Messages will rotate with other partners for each regular season home event.

Two (2) in-game full screen static ad exposure per regular season home event

One (1) three point sponsor feature entitlement. A founding partner logo will play on the three point animation and founding partners will rotate the turns as three pointers are made.

One (1) :30 second PRE-game sponsor supplied video commercial OR full color logo with corresponding announcement per regular season home varsity game

PREMIER PARTNERSHIP (8 TOTAL, \$1,500/YEAR)

OUTDOOR DIGITAL CONTENT

PRE-IN-POST GAME rotating business name, logo, and/or tagline on video display. Messages will rotate with other partners for each regular season home event.

One (1) in-game full screen static ad exposure per regular season home event

INDOOR DIGITAL CONTENT

PRE-IN-POST GAME rotating business name, logo, and/or tagline on video display. Messages will rotate with other partners for each regular season home event.

One (1) in-game full screen static ad exposure per regular season home event

MULTI-MEDIA/PRINT/PROMOTIONS

One (1) grouped PA announcement at all home varsity events (boys and girls)

One (1) ad exposure on the Eagle Eye Broadcasting stream per regular season varsity event



Johnson County Central Lunch Menu

A Note from the Director of Student Services and Special Education

BY DR. LAURA RADEMACHER

Hello JCC Families,

It's hard to believe how quickly summer flew by! As the days of poolside fun and sleeping in wind down, we're getting ready for another exciting school year.

I'm thrilled to officially join the JCC Thunderbirds as your new Director of Student Services and Special Education (SPED). This is a new position for the district, and I'm eager to work alongside students, families, staff, and the community to support every learner from preschool through graduation.

As Director of Student Services and SPED, I oversee:

- Special Education (SPED) services
- IDEA and Special Education Grants
- Section 504 Plans
- Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)
- BIST (Behavior Intervention Support Team)
- School Improvement Team

If you ever have questions or concerns about your student's progress, please feel free to reach out. Your child's teacher is always the best first point of contact, as they see your student every day and can provide the most immediate insight.

Understanding the Acronyms

Education is full of acronyms and terms that can feel overwhelming. Here are a few key ones to help you navigate:

- **SPED** – Special Education: Services for students who qualify under Nebraska's Rule 51.
- **IEP** – Individualized Education Program: A legal plan that outlines special education services tailored to a student's unique needs.
- **504 Plan** – A legal document that provides accommodations for students with disabilities who do not require special instruction.
- **FAPE** – Free and Appropriate Public Education: The right of every student to an education that meets their individual needs.

• **FERPA** – Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act: A federal law protecting the privacy of student education records (like HIPAA, but for schools).

• **IDEA** – Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: A law ensuring educational services and support for students with disabilities across the U.S.

• **LRE** – Least Restrictive Environment: Ensures students are educated with their peers in general education settings whenever appropriate.

• **MTSS** – Multi-Tiered System of Support: A framework that provides academic and behavioral support for all students.

• **SAT** – Student Assistance Team: A school-based team that helps identify and support students who may need extra help.

• **BIST** – Behavior Intervention Support Team: A team that works with students and staff to support positive behavior and self-regulation.

There are many systems and supports in place at JCC to help every student succeed. I look forward to working with all of you to make this a positive and successful school year.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or would like to learn more. You can reach me at Laura.Rademacher@jcccentral.org or 402-335-7851.

Next month, I'll be writing about what Special Education is and explaining the key differences between an IEP and 504 plan. Stay tuned!

Warmly,
Dr. Rad



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402-864-4171 Principal @ Cook
402-864-4181 MS Office @ Cook

Website: www.jccentral.org

This newsletter is produced monthly to inform parents, district patrons and others about school events, classroom events, and student achievements in the classroom and extra curricular activities. This information is submitted by faculty and staff members. Information may be submitted to offices at Tecumseh and Cook.

The school reserves the right to edit information in the interest of space and content.

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Non-Discrimination

It shall be the policy of Johnson County Central Public Schools to not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, handicap, or age in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for discrimination concerns. Inquiries concerning any of the above, or Title IX and Rehabilitation Act Regulations (504) should be directed to the Superintendent of Schools, 358 N 6th Street, Tecumseh, NE 68329; (402)335-3320.

Child Find

Children that are birth to 5 years old who are experiencing problems with speech language, cognitive, emotional and/or physical development or have a disability can receive services through Early Childhood Education Services. If interested or in need of more information please contact Rebecca Kling, Special Education Coordinator or Jon Rother, Superintendent at 402-335-3320.