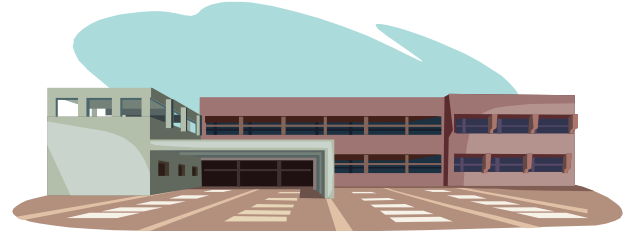


# The Bennet Elementary Express

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## Character Counts Corner

### The Pressure to Win in Sports and Business

A former successful college coach and athletic director once wrote me a note about the state of college sports.

The pressure to win in high-profile schools is so great, he said, that it's almost impossible to resist rationalizing. When competitors cheat or engage in other unethical conduct, the tendency is to redefine the ground rules for competition rather than be at a disadvantage.

He compared the way win-hungry boosters blur the vision and undermine the integrity of coaches and administrators with the way money-hungry shareholders stress stock prices, which promotes accounting manipulation and other ethical shortcuts.

In sports, outsiders who aren't concerned with a college's educational mission or notions of sportsmanship and character-building promote a "no excuses" demand on coaches that can transform an athletic program into a business driven by the pursuit of money and glory.

In business, shareholders (from day traders to money managers of mutual and pension funds) who aren't concerned with the ethics or long-term viability of a company create pressures and incentives that can promote short-term decision-making and undermine the economic and moral health of their firm.

We need people to act as guardians who will understand and protect the soul of their enterprise. Coaches should be allowed to think about more than winning, and business executives should be given the opportunity to consider more than stock prices and short-term profits.

If we don't recalibrate our incentive systems and insulate coaches and managers from unhealthy influences, things will only get worse.

This is Michael Josephson reminding you that character counts.

## School and Community Events

### Achievement Tests Next Week

As we noted last week, we will be conducting our Terra Nova Achievement Tests this fall. Students in grades 2-6 at Bennet Elementary will be taking these Achievement Tests **September 28<sup>th</sup> – Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup>**. Make up testing will be conducted during the week of Oct. 5<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of taking an achievement test is to find out which skills students have learned and which skills need further development. The test requires no special preparation, but there are a few things that can be done to prepare students for this testing time. Please make sure:

- \* **that students are at school, on time**- It is important that they be at school next week if at all possible. Of course, if they are sick, running a fever etc., they need to stay home.
- \* **that students get plenty of sleep**- they can't do their best if they are tired
- \* **that students eat a good breakfast**- they can't do their best if they are hungry.
- \* **that students think positively and try their best**- some of the test questions may be more difficult than others and some material may be new to students; students are not expected to know all the answers.

### P-T Conferences Completed

Once again, P-T Conferences were very well attended! We would like to thank all parents who took time out of their schedules to come in and visit with our staff about their children's progress.

**If you were unable to attend the conferences on Thursday and would still like to conference with your child's teacher, please contact the school and we will gladly set up a time before or after school to meet with you, or conduct a phone conference.**

### Bennet Fire and Rescue Department to Host Open House/Breakfast

The Bennet Fire & Rescue Department will be hosting an Open House and Breakfast Feed at the Department Fire Station located at 480 Fir St. in Bennet, Nebraska, on October 3, 2009, beginning at 7:00am, with a free-will donation breakfast. The Open House will conclude at

10:00am. The Waffleman will be on hand serving up waffles!

The purpose of the Open House is to recognize National Fire Prevention and Awareness Week and allow the department an



opportunity to discuss with the community ways they can better prepare their homes to be safer from fires and other emergencies. The StarCare Air Ambulance will be on hand along with representatives from the St. Elizabeth Burn Unit and the Nebraska Sports Council.

The Bennet Fire and Rescue Department will also conduct a Fire Safety Drill, followed by an assembly at Bennet Elementary School on Wednesday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at 8:45 in the morning.

#### **Palmyra Fire Department Hosting Concession Stand**

The Palmyra Fire Department will be grilling hot dogs and hamburgers at the football game tonight. They will also be running the concession stand.

The rescue squad will be on hand to check blood pressure and blood sugar.

#### **Fifth Grade Girls Basketball Sign-up**

Sign-up for fifth grade girls interested in playing basketball will be held Thursday, Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>, at 6:30 p.m. at the Bennet Elementary School lunch room. Contact Nikki Koenig with any questions 420-268-7334.

#### **Character Counts News!**

By Mrs. Stilwell

Bennet Ele. Is a Character Counts School. In keeping with the Winter Olympics to be held in Vancouver, British Columbia in February, our theme for Character Counts will be "Training for Character." You may see the rings with the pillars of character in the school entry.

Instead of a torch runner, Mr. Robb will lead the gathering of athletes or students from the basketball court on the playground to the gym during an assembly to kick off Character Counts week. Our teachers are the "coaches" of character. Olympians are training to be the best they can be with long hours of practice. Our students are training for an even higher goal, than a gold medal. Good character will count all of their lives.

The October pillar of Character is trustworthiness. Please have your child wear a blue shirt on Oct. 1 and 15 if you can. There will be lessons those days on how to be true blue. We hope the parents will cheer on their athletes in character training.

#### **Fine Arts Boosters Pizza Sales Continue**

This is just a reminder that Pizza Sales for the Fine Arts Boosters continues this week. Members of the Bands and High School Music Department will be selling Club's Choice Food Items **through Thursday, October 1st**. If no one contacts you, you may call Ms. Murphy or Mrs. McCreight at school, (782-3535). Please remember, the money is to be collected at the time of the sale. **Pick-up day for the orders is Saturday, October 31<sup>st</sup> from 7:00 – 8:30 a.m. at Palmyra High School.**

#### **"Kids on the Block" Present Assembly to Students**

"Kids on the Block," a puppet program sponsored by the Nebraska Elks Association, made a stop at Bennet Elementary last week to present an assembly on Bullying.

Students in grades K-3 were treated to several skits depicting various forms of bullying that can take place in school and the community. Following each skit, the puppet masters conducted question and answer segments with the students to further explore how bullying affects students.

Students in grades 4 – 6 also got to watch several skits on bullying. One of the key discussion topics for this group was cyber-bullying and its effect on students. Examples of several instances of bullying were discussed with this group. Students were made aware that bullying is always physical or verbal. Bullying can be the simple act of making others feel unwelcome or excluding them from activities and group discussions.

Students in both groups learned how to react to bullying. They were given cues to use when they saw bullying such as using peer pressure to discourage acts of bullying. Finally, and most importantly students learned of the need to report bullying to adults in authority.

Our thanks go to the Nebraska Elks Association for bringing "Kids on the Block" to our school. It was a very timely and worthwhile assembly.



Members of "Kids on the Block" talk to the Kindergarten -3<sup>rd</sup> grade students about bullying and how to react to a bully. The students were given many good ideas about ways to respond to a bully.