
MEMO

TO: BLUE RIDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION
MR. RYAN PEYTON, SUPERINTENDENT

FROM: SUNNY MCMURRY, PRINCIPAL, RUTH M. SCHNEIDER ELEMENTARY

DATE: 2/12/26

RE: FEBRUARY 2026 PRINCIPAL REPORT

Exemplary Knights

Kindergarten: Rue Fernandez

Rue is a great addition to the classroom! In the beginning she was shy and hesitant to participate in class discussions but now raises her hands and joins right in! She is kind, thoughtful, helpful and always a good friend to others. She is always on the lookout for friends who need help and offers assistance where and when needed. She follows classroom and school rules, expectations and procedures without any reminders and is a great example to others. She works hard on all assignments even adding more details to her work or more sentences to her responses. For these reasons and more, I recommend Rue Fernandez as the Exemplary Knight in Kindergarten.

First Grade: Caden Flessner

Caden is a kind, respectful, and joyful student who comes to school each day with a big smile and ready to learn. He eagerly takes on challenges and takes great pride in his work, always doing his best. His love for learning shines through in everything he does. Beyond being an outstanding student, Caden is also a truly wonderful friend. He is always willing to help others and goes out of his way to make sure everyone feels included and valued. These qualities—his positivity, hard work, and kindness—are why Caden was chosen as this month's Exemplary Knight.

Second Grade: Daxtyn Haile

Daxtyn is such a hard worker, and he is the first person to jump up and help anyone who needs it! He works incredibly hard and has grown so much since the beginning of the school year. He really shines in his story-telling and math skills! Daxtyn always knows how to make someone laugh and lights up the room with his positive attitude! He is a friend to everyone and always has a compliment ready for whoever he sees. He is very creative and does a wonderful job sharing his talents with others by teaching them new skills. Daxtyn is brave, sweet, and intelligent. I am extremely proud of Daxtyn and love seeing all of the amazing things he accomplishes each day!

Third Grade: Anna Crawford

I nominate Anna Crawford for Exemplary Knight! She is an important part of our 3rd grade classroom. She cares about her classmates and teachers. For example, she tries to make them feel better if they are

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sad and cheers for them when they do something well. Anna also sets a good example by participating in class, working hard and doing her best on all assignments. Even when things are tough, she keeps a good attitude and doesn't give up. Her work area is organized, she is respectful of the class rules and routines, and is always ready to get to work. Keep up the amazing work, Anna!

Exemplary Knight Staff Member: Jamie Hammer

Jamie is such an amazing one on one aide to her student. She has so much patience working with this young lady day in and day out. I have never seen Jamie get mad or frustrated or even slightly irritated. She keeps a calm composure through every part of the day. She shows up every day with a smile and a positive attitude. She is always willing to lend a helping hand where one is needed. She shows so much love and encouragement to not only the child she works with directly, but also the children in the classroom where she works. She loves to celebrate even the smallest accomplishments for any child when she sees them. Jamie is a blessing to our entire school!

Schneider Playground

The students and staff are incredibly excited and thankful for your approval of new play spaces at Schneider. We appreciate your continued understanding of the needs our Pre-K through 3rd grade students and are thankful you have made outdoor play and physical activity more engaging with these new playscapes!

Instruction

Our Building Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) spent our most recent meeting discussing goals for early out days as well as specifics on how our work would lead to increased learning for students. Our team identified the following areas as items we would like to focus on during Early Out Professional Development time:

1. Continuity among grade levels
 - a. Common assessments
 - b. Student grading and feedback should be the same across classrooms
 - c. Vertical alignment to understand common assessments
2. Standards based grading
 - a. Understanding purpose and how to implement
 - b. Create common assessments
 - c. Organize Google Drive materials to streamline resources
3. Review data
 - a. Where have we been?
 - b. Where do we need to go?
4. Structured time, expected outcome
5. Cross- content collaboration (SEL support, SPED support, check ins on kids with IEPs, 504s, intervention)
 - a. Rotation for collaboration with specialists
 - b. Time to co-plan hands-on units
 - c. Integration of CKLA units with specials areas

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The overarching question we focused on was: How will early-outs lead to increased learning or achievement for students? It was evident in our discussion that teachers feel strongly that this time needs to be structured and lead to a specific outcome. Unfortunately, with the lack of common planning time in our master schedule right now, teachers are unable to regularly collaborate to meet student needs. In particular, teachers who have students with IEPs in their classrooms do not have a chance to consistently meet with special education case managers or paraprofessionals to discuss progress toward goals, modifications to assignments or adaptations to support learning experiences. Beyond this, our new CKLA curriculum offers incredible extension opportunities that could easily tie in art, music and physical movement, but because of the lack of collaboration time or common plan periods, those extensions are nearly impossible. Finally, our staff has been working on better understanding the vertical alignment of Illinois learning standards and the connection to IAR assessments. This has led us to a desire to explore standards- based grading. Having early-out professional development time would allow us to be able to dig deep into questions like, “What are grades?” “What is the purpose of grading? “What is Standards-Based grading and reporting?” “Why do some parents have concerns about standards based grading and reporting? And “How do we identify which standards to address and assess?” Through integrated planning opportunities during early-outs, we will be better able to meet student needs, plan intervention opportunities, use data to determine next steps in instruction, and discover ways to extend learning for students who need a challenge.

Update on School Improvement Goals:

Goal	February Update
We will decrease major physical aggression referrals to less than 125 referrals by end of year.	From January Total: 68 referrals/ 18 school days Avg. 4 referrals/day 29 majors, 39 minors 31 students responsible total Behaviors: - Majors- #1 Physical Aggression (8 referrals in January; YTD 53) -Minors- #1 Disruption Location: #1 Classroom for Majors #1 Classroom for Minors
We will monitor daily attendance with a goal of reaching 95% average daily attendance.	January daily attendance rate for K-3 students was 86%. When including our Pre-K students, daily attendance was 82%. These figures may be lower than actual attendance because we had an error in the programming of e-learning attendance days. We will correct the error!

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Kindergarten Registration:

We are excited to welcome our newest kindergarten Knights! We will hold kindergarten registration on Tuesday, March 10 at 5:45 pm at Schneider. Children who turn 5 on or before September 1, 2026 may register for kindergarten. Registration is an adults-only event. Please share with anyone who has a child ready to enroll for kindergarten!

Substitute Teachers:

We are so thankful for the hard work Megan Hardesty puts in to find subs on a daily basis. Throughout the month of January, we had five absences that needed to be covered in-house. For these absences, three were covered by admin (McMurry, Diener, Trimble) and two were filled partially by our Title Interventionist sub (requiring us to cancel at least one group). So far in February, we have filled absences with the help of our counselor, music teacher, Title interventionist sub, reassigning a library aide sub and admin.

Light Up the Knight

We would love to see everyone at our Light Up The Knight Glow Dance event at BRHS hosted by P.I.E.! We are excited for the dance, as well as laser tag & raffle. Join us on Saturday, February 21 from 6-8pm for a night of family fun!

Upcoming Events:**February**

2/19-PreK Growing Together, Schneider, 5:30 p.m.

2/21- Light Up the Knight Event at BRHS

March

3/10- Spring Picture Day; Kindergarten Registration, 5:45 p.m. Schneider Cafeteria

3/12- 2nd-3rd Spring Concert, BRHS Moore Gym, 6:30 p.m.

3/13- End of 3rd Quarter

3/18- Board Meeting, HS Library, 7:00 p.m