



December 2016

2015 - 2016

# Heartland Community Schools

# ANNUAL REPORT



Our students are incredibly involved and supportive of one another!

Showing the class that is HCS!

## A NOTE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

*“Thank you for your continued support ... “*

The 2015-2016 academic year is behind us and once again it is time for us to provide our patrons with a school district annual report. We are very proud of the many accomplishments our students have achieved along with the help of teachers, staff members, parents, and community.

Much of the data that we use to measure progress is included in this Annual Report. You will find information on student achievement, demographics of the school district, along with financial information. I encourage you to review the report to become more familiar with our school district. With your help we will be able to achieve our mission of a quality education for each and every student.

You may also review our state report card on the Nebraska

Department of Education’s website at <http://drs.education.ne.gov/Pages/default.aspx>. This site is dedicated to facts about public education in Nebraska.

### School Finances

Tax dollars are a very important resource for school districts in their efforts to educate children. Nebraska schools receive taxes and other receipts from local, county, state, and federal sources. As you look at the information included in this report, you will notice that the great majority of the dollars used to fund education in our district are generated by local tax dollars. The other resources are necessary yet they are small by comparison.

As you can see from the financial graphs on the following pages, we have worked to keep spending low while providing for a quality education for our students. Going into the 2015-16 school year, the amount of tax dollars that we asked for actually decreased once again from the year prior.

Many of the building and curriculum updates are financed via our depreciation fund, which cannot be utilized for salaries or operating expenses.

The Heartland Community Schools rest on a solid financial foundation and we appreciate the support of tax dollars and realize the care with which we need to take in our asking for this funding.

# ABOUT THE HEARTLAND COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Serving students in York, Hamilton, and Fillmore counties and the communities of Bradshaw and Henderson.

## Thank You

If you have children in the Heartland schools, we hope that you are involved in their education as a partner with their teachers.

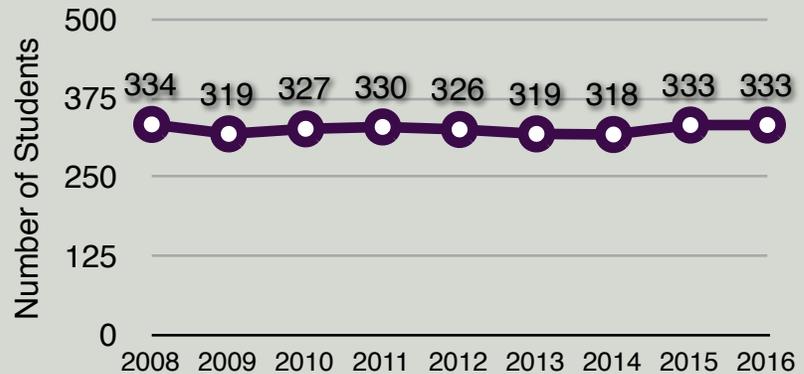
If you reside within our district, but your children are all out of school, there are plenty of ways to stay involved.

If you know those who are attending elsewhere, but live within our district, have them revisit and “come home” to a great, small-town, progressive district that is Heartland Community Schools.

Thank you for your continued support and feel free to stop in the office at any time.



## Enrollment Trends



The enrollment at Heartland Community Schools has leveled over the last few years following a drop in numbers at the beginning of the 2005-06 school year. The number of students in grades 7-12 remain relatively steady and we are encouraged by the growing number in our elementary grades.

## New Programs

The elementary teachers implemented their new research-based core reading program, “Reading Street”, in the 2012-2013 school year and have seen some immediate success. A new math curriculum was implemented in the 2015-16 school year. A new “hands-on” science curriculum will be introduced in the 2016-17 school year.

Each teacher and students in grades 7-12 have been issued a laptop, the students and teachers in grades K-6 now have access to iPads at the ratio of two students per device, and we have upgraded our network speeds and capabilities. We are busy with training teachers on the most effective ways to utilize the technology in order to heighten our student achievement.



## IPADS & READING ASSESSMENTS

Our elementary teachers are now using iPads to conduct quick reading assessments with the students in order to receive immediate feedback. The assessments had been done with paper and pencil in years prior. Now, they are able to make instructional decisions to help the student improve immediately after the evaluation.

# FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Providing Quality Instruction & Facilities  
While Being A Good Steward  
Of Taxpayers' Money

## We Are Very Fortunate

Having updated facilities, equipment for teaching, and modern curriculum resources are all important for a progressive learning environment.

You can see by the list of projects that we have completed over the last few years, that we are fortunate to be in a healthy fiscal position.

The majority of these projects were paid for out of our depreciation or special building funds.

We have been able to complete these projects and plan those on the horizon all while lowering our tax asking each of the last 3 years.

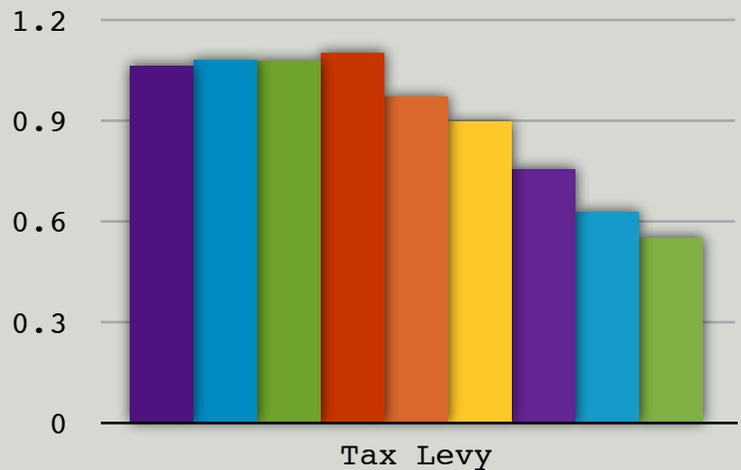
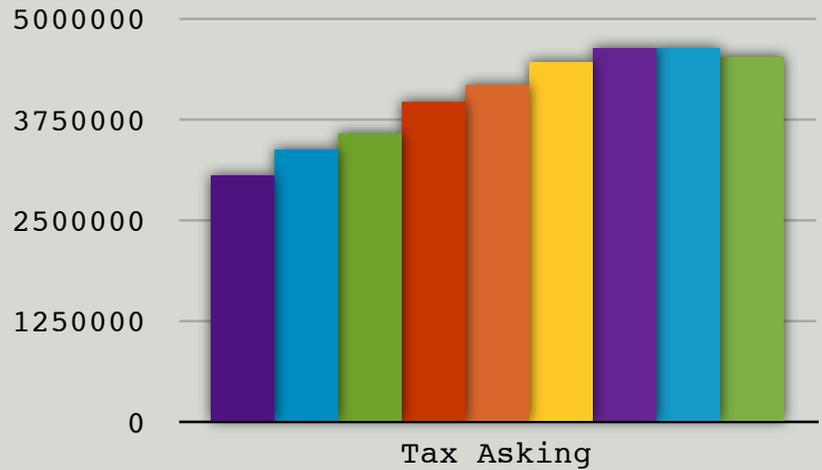
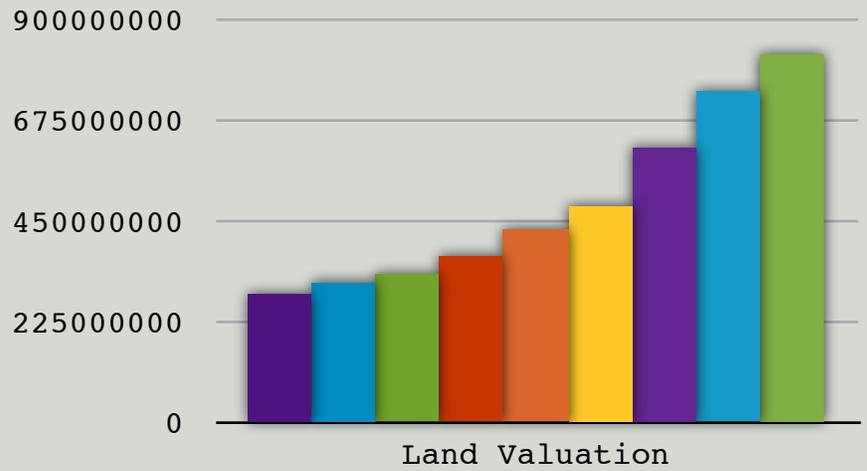
CURRICULUM	FACILITIES	FUTURE PLANS
New Reading Program	Updates to Furniture	Remodel North Gym
1:1 Laptops & iPads	Updates to Carpet	New Technology
New Math Program	AC in all Classrooms	New Social Studies
New Science Program	Library Updates	Fire Alarm System
Development of Curriculum Guides	Reconditioning and Updates to the Track	Theater Sound & Lighting
Expansion of Programs	Courtyards	Phones & Intercom
TRANSPORTATION	HVAC Units	Electrical System
Activity Bus	Bus Barn	Activity Bus
Route Buses	Field Storage Shed	Route Buses
School Car	Doors & Windows	Suburban
<p>Even with these updates, our budget &amp; tax asking will <u>decrease</u> for the third year in a row in 2016-17.</p>		Doors & Windows
		Roofing & Concrete
		Band Uniforms

## What are the trends?

	LAND VALUES	TAX ASKING	TAX LEVY	TOTAL BUDGET
PER YEAR OVER THE LAST <u>FIVE</u> YEARS				
	+18.2%	+1.7%	-8.6%	+0.92%

# BY THE NUMBERS ...

Land values have increased sharply, our tax asking has declined recently, and our tax levy fell to \$0.55 per hundred dollars valuation, from \$1.10 in 2010-11.



# STUDENT PERFORMANCE

## Evaluating Assessment Data to Improve Instruction

### Standardized testing vs. state standards assessments

While test scores do not always paint the most accurate picture of students progress or success, we need a system in place to monitor student progress and provide data for analyzing our instructional programs. Standardized tests are those that are written by a testing company, have very high validity and reliability, and are taken by a large number of students across the nation. These tests assess a wide variety of topics in a particular subject area. The state standards assessments are written in much the same way, but focus specifically on those topics in reading, math, and science as identified by the state department of education.

### Standardized tests

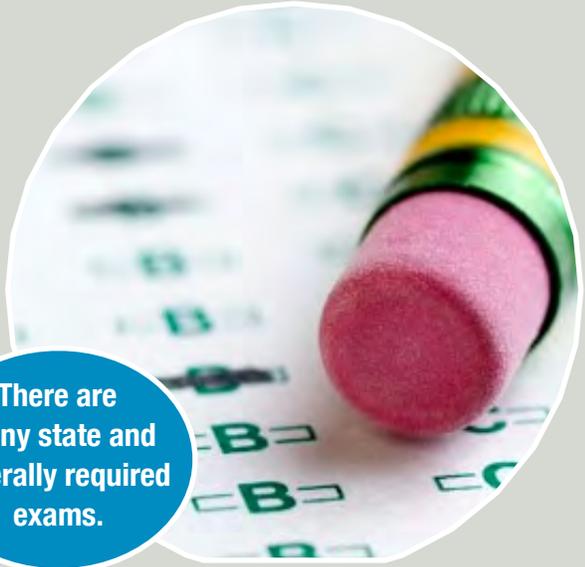
The standardized tests that we use with our students include: The NWEA MAP tests at grades 3-9, the PLAN for sophomores, and the

ACT test, which is typically taken during the students' junior year. All tests measure how well our students perform in the areas of reading, language, math, & science as compared to millions of other students across the nation. We also analyze these scores internally to look for areas of strength or improvement as our students move through the system. The MAP tests are used twice each year to provide immediate feedback to teachers on the needs of our students. Other national tests are administered once each year.

Our students perform at or above national averages on all standardized tests.

### State standards assessments

We are required to teach and assess the state standards in reading, writing, math, science, and social



There are many state and federally required exams.

studies each year. Beginning in the spring of 2010, all students across the state participated in the state developed reading exam in grades 3-9. In the spring of 2011, math was added to the state testing and in the spring of 2012, science joined the battery of tests. The “benchmark” years for reporting this data is in grades 4, 8, & 11 in math and writing and grades 5, 8, & 11 in science and social studies.

In 2015-16, the state implemented a new way of analyzing the quality of schools in Nebraska. The program is called AQuESTT and more information can be found below.

## AQuESTT

AQuESTT is a new accountability system that is broader than past state and federal systems in that it goes beyond test scores to classify schools on, among other factors, growth,

improvement and graduation rates as well as a detailed analysis of individual schools. Based on individual school findings, schools may receive credit toward their classification for certain improvements and/or also lose classification points.

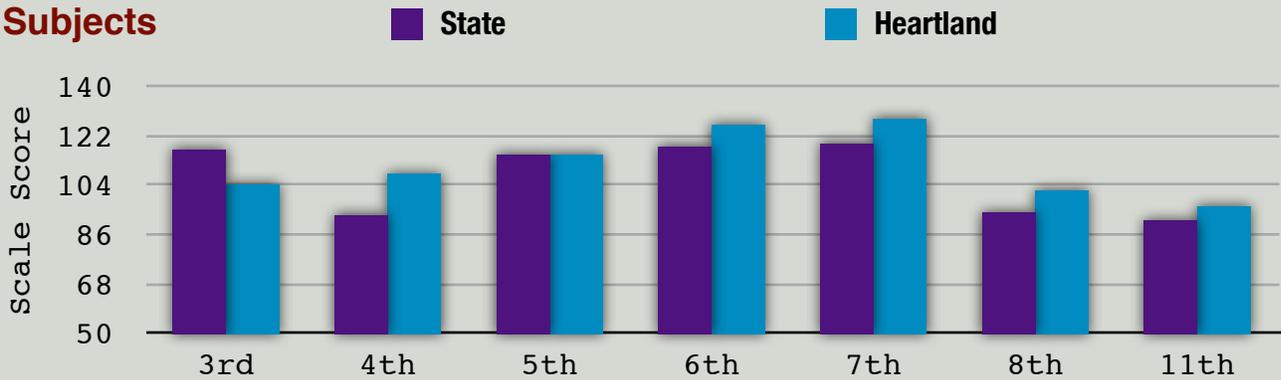
The new classifications will be highlighted in next year's annual report, but may be accessed from our website : [heartlandschools.org](http://heartlandschools.org) under “Our District”>”District Profile”>”Achievement Data”

# ASSESSMENT OF STATE STANDARDS

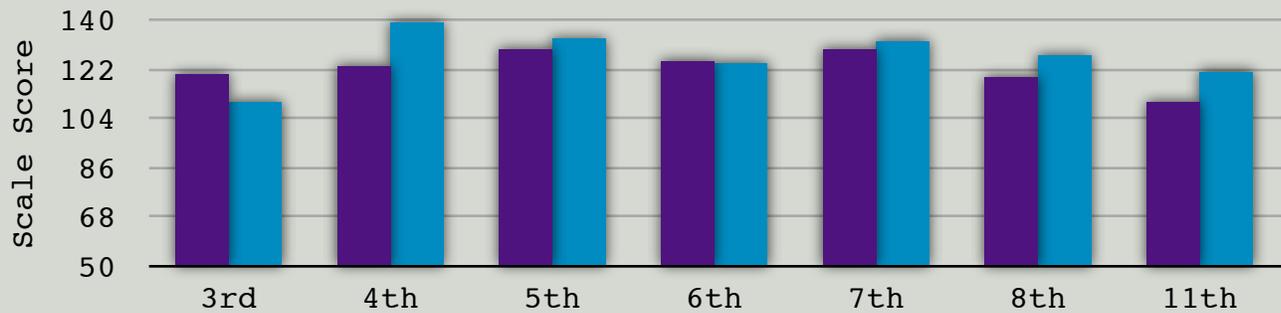
Nebraska's accountability system ranks school districts by their students' average scale scores on state tests. All students in the state of Nebraska took the same "one chance" test in the subject areas of reading, mathematics, science, and writing.

In a school of our size, one or two students can make a large difference in our data averages. This is why we sometimes see large changes in our scores from one year to the next on some tests.

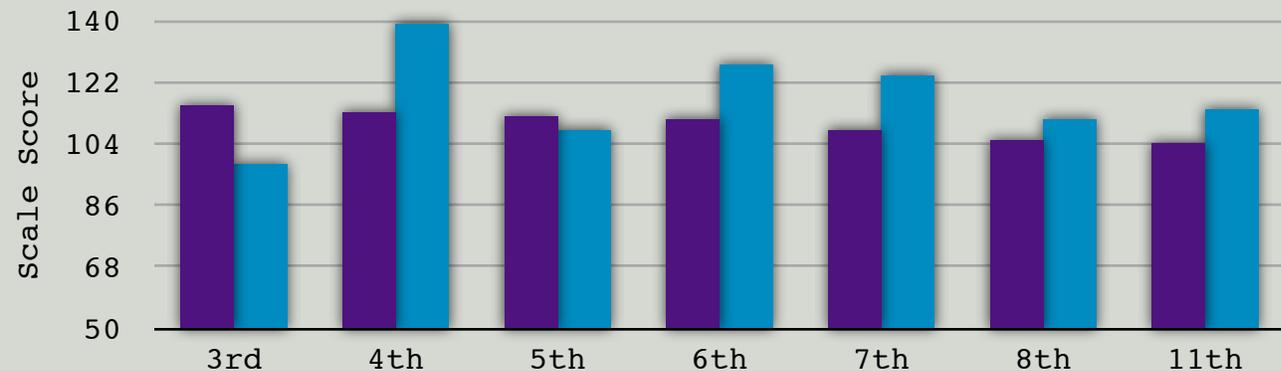
## All Subjects



## Reading



## Mathematics



# EXTERNAL ACCREDITATION TEAM FINDINGS

## External Accreditation Team is Impressed With Heartland

AdvancED is the global leader in providing continuous improvement and accreditation services to over 32,000 institutions serving 20 million students worldwide. A team of trained experts visited our school for two days in March and analyzed nearly a dozen different areas, from the effectiveness of our teaching to leadership.

Scores were based upon standardized measures from personal interviews, observations of teaching, and data collections. The external evaluators found that Heartland exceeded the average scores from their large network of schools in nearly every domain. They commented that it is very rare for a school to exceed the averages in this number of areas. Most schools are above in some areas and below in multiple others. The only score slightly below the average, digital learning environment, was attributed to the fact that we are relatively new at the one-to-one use of technology and we don't use the devices every day in every class.

### Recommendation

Develop and implement professional learning communities involving all staff, at all levels, that are designed to focus on instruction and student learning.

### Powerful Practices Identified At Heartland

- The staff of the school are invested in the lives and success of the student body.
- The school offers students robust and varied courses with differentiated learning opportunities, including early childhood programming with support for students with special education needs, and various extra-curricular activities.
- The community is actively involved with and supportive of the school.

**We have received AdvancED accreditation!**

Domains	External Review	AEN*
Equitable Learning Environment	2.84	2.69
High Expectations Environment	3.03	2.81
Supportive Learning Environment	3.38	3.06
Active Learning Environment	3.23	2.94
Progress Monitoring and Feedback Environment	3.10	2.79
Well-Managed Learning Environment	3.36	3.13
Digital Learning Environment	1.80	1.82
Overall Score	282.56	278.34
Teaching and Learning Impact	269.52	268.94
Leadership Capacity	294.55	292.64
Resource Utilization	302.86	283.86

\* *AdvancEd Network Average*

### Mission

Heartland Community Schools – Henderson/Bradshaw is dedicated to educating all students by providing challenging opportunities to learn according to individual needs.

### Goal

- To improve student learning through the alignment of teaching objectives and state standards within a subject for all grade levels.

### Goal

- Increase student achievement in the area of vocabulary for all students, grades K-12.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- One third of our teachers hold Masters' degrees and have nearly 16 years of experience, on average.
- Over 90% of our students attend a post-secondary institution.
- 96% of our high school students participate in an extra-curricular activity.
- Our enrollment has remained relatively steady for the last 10 years.
- We graduate 10% more students in 4-years of high school than the state average.
- Our attendance rate is higher than the state average.
- A higher percentage of our budget goes directly to instruction than the average school in the state.

## CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB ...

You can access the state testing results and other numbers from all schools from across the state of Nebraska at the following link:

<http://reportcard.education.ne.gov/Search/DistrictSearch.aspx>

From current news to archived stories and from lunch menus to the latest in instructional programs, it is all on our school district website at:

<http://www.heartlandschools.org>

And on Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/heartlandcommunityschools>

In compliance with Title II of the Education Amendments of 1976; title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Heartland Community Schools shall not discriminate on the basis of sex, age, race, color, national origin, religion, or handicap in the education programs or activities which it operates.

### ALWAYS SEEKING KNOWLEDGE

Depending on the school year, our teachers utilize 8-10 full days for ongoing training, planning, and research in order to improve our instruction.

We gather performance data on a regular basis and spend time sorting through indicators of need. We also have delved into the latest research of instructional theory in order to serve our students in a more effective and efficient manner.

Our committees are in the process of establishing an instructional model and will redesign our teacher and administrator evaluation tools based on this research.

HEARTLAND COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

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Henderson, NE 68371

