

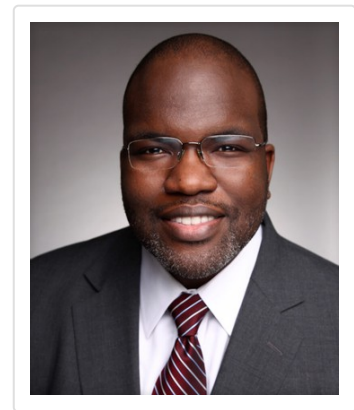
Ankeny Schools Snapshot

A monthly district newsletter

January 2022

Advancing the Vision

with Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Erick Pruitt



A new year brings fresh perspectives, and it was truly wonderful to welcome our students back to our schools in 2022. As we greet this new year, there are a number of key initiatives and events underway.

One of the largest initiatives underway is the work to build a [new strategic plan](#). Currently, our action teams are meeting to build out plans specific to their objectives. By the end of this school year, we will have a new plan in place and a community who came together to design it. I look forward to working alongside these teams in the coming months to finish building out this new plan that will serve as the driving force in the work we do together for our students.

Another ever present initiative in Ankeny is construction. I want to provide a few updates on some of our construction projects underway:

- **Elementary at the Grove:** We had the initial pre-construction meeting this week pertaining to the next elementary, which we are referring to as the Elementary at the Grove. (Located at NW 18th St and NW Abbie St) Dirt moving will begin April 1, 2022 or sooner depending on the weather. Construction trailers and equipment will arrive mid-March.
- **Central Office:** Demolition has continued and is close to completion at the new Central Office at Neveln. The new plumbing and HVAC is starting to be put in place. The completion of the new Central Office is on track for late this year.
- **Parkview Middle School:** We have confirmation that the final piece for the remodel, which is the lockers for the locker rooms, are finally off the ship(s) and in route. We look forward to putting the finishing touch on this remodel project soon.

Before break, I mentioned another offering we would have coming up is a Community Conversation on Mental Health and Safety. More information about this event is included later in this newsletter, but I wanted to extend a warm welcome to former Cyclone Lyndsey Fennelly, as she shares her mental health story with us. Her experience can help us all learn how to come together to collectively support the mental health of the children in our community.

Finally, I feel I need to address the impact the Omicron variant is having on our schools and workforce. I don't know if you, like me, have been receiving back-to-back COVID-19 exposure notifications or seen the most recent data on our [COVID-19 dashboard](#), but the fast spread of this variant is impacting schools the same as it is in every other industry. Three things I want to call attention to as we think about this variant and its impact on our schools:

1. If you have not recently, please [thank our staff](#) for their work to keep our schools open and our students in school. Whether it's the teacher covering a classroom for a colleague who is currently isolating at home or the custodian making sure the classrooms are deep cleaned each night, every one of our staff members is making school happen for our students, every single day.
2. Like all businesses, Ankeny Schools is experiencing an unprecedented number of staff absences. We are doing what we can to fill teaching positions, but our substitute pools are experiencing a similar number of COVID-19 related absences. We have partnered with our teachers to help ensure coverage of classrooms, but I ask for your patience as we navigate this current surge in COVID-19 cases and related absences.
3. If you have not yet submitted feedback, the Return to Learn plan is undergoing its six month review, as required by the U.S. Department of Education. More information is below in this newsletter about how to provide your feedback on our current COVID-19 mitigation efforts.

Thank you,

Dr. Erick D. Pruitt

Superintendent of Schools



JOIN US FOR A
**COMMUNITY
CONVERSATION ON
MENTAL HEALTH &
SAFETY**



REGISTER TODAY!



Thursday, February 3, 2022
Northview Middle School
1302 N Ankeny Blvd.
Please use the South
Entrance (Door S10)



6:30 p.m. Mental Health & Safety Fair
7 p.m. Main Event featuring Lyndsey
Fennelly
8 p.m. Breakout sessions

Community Conversation on Mental Health & Safety

WHEN

Thursday, Feb. 3rd, 6:30pm

WHERE

1302 North Ankeny Boulevard
Ankeny, IA

MORE INFORMATION

You are invited to attend a Community Conversation on Mental Health and Safety in Ankeny Schools!

Please join us for this event featuring keynote speaker Lyndsey Fennelly. Fennelly, one of the greatest point guards in Iowa State history, currently spends her time coaching high school kids. She is joining us to share her experiences with mental health, dealing with anxiety, and landing in the hospital twice. She wants others to not be afraid to talk about the topic.

6:30 PM: Mental Health & Safety Fair

7:00 PM: Main Program

8:00 PM: Breakout Sessions

Please use the South Entrance (Door S10); Parking available in the South parking lot

Livestreaming will also be available.

Join us for this event where we will come together to discuss how parents, the school district, and the entire community can collectively support the mental health of our children.

This event is free and open to the public, but please register at the link below to assist us with planning:

<https://www.ankenyschools.org/news/2022/01/community-conversation-on-mental-health-safety/>

2022-2023 Student Annual Update and New Student Registration Begins Feb. 4

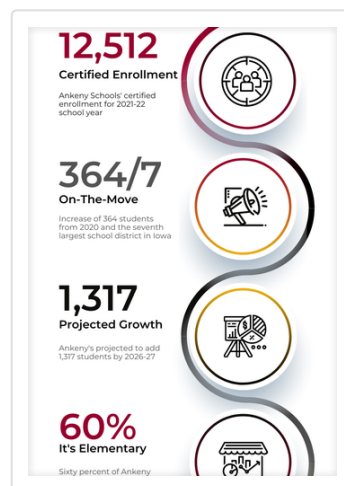
Mark your calendars for the current student annual update and new student registration on February 4, 2022 at 8:00 AM. As our city grows, so does the number of students attending Ankeny Schools. To manage the steady increase, as well as changing information for our

current students, Ankeny Schools will kick off the 2022 Annual Update and New Student Registration, including preschool registration, on February 4 at 8:00 AM.

For the first time, preschool families will use the same process as our K-12 registration. [New families can use the district website to access the registration page.](#) Parents of current Ankeny students should use the Parent Portal to complete their annual update and add a new preschool or kindergarten student to their household.

We are especially encouraging our current Ankeny Schools families to log into their Parent Portal beginning February 4 at 8:00 a.m. to update and/or confirm their household and student information. Here are four reasons you should take the time to complete an annual update:

1. Register a new preschool or kindergarten student at the same time you complete the annual update of current students using your Parent Portal.
2. Let Ankeny Schools know how you want to be contacted when early out, school closings or emergencies happen by marking text, phone, and/or email in your Parent Portal.
3. Update emergency contacts to your household information guarantees Ankeny Schools administration will know who to call if you are unavailable in an emergency.
4. It's quick and easy. Log into you parent portal – there is link if you need to reset your password or don't remember your user name – Click “more” at the bottom of the list on the left side of your screen, then click “registration” and follow the prompts to complete process and add a student if needed.



Return to Learn Plan: Six Month Review

On April 21, 2021, the U.S. Department of Education (USED) released its American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ARP ESSER or ESSER III) interim final requirements related to district ESSER III plans and district plans for a safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services. ([ESSER III State and Local Plan Requirements](#))



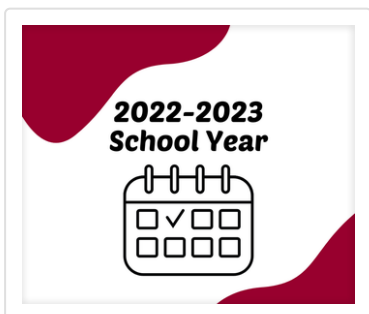
As part of this plan, each district must assure that it will:

- Review its Return to Learn plan at least every six months until September 30, 2023, including seeking and considering public input regarding whether to revise its plan, and
- Revise its Return to Learn plan (when necessary) at least every six months to ensure it remains relevant and meets statutory and regulatory requirements, including seeking public input on any revisions to its plan

[Ankeny's existing state-approved Return to Learn plan and updated guidance can be viewed here.](#) The plan was last formally reviewed and public input was last formally sought in August 2021. As a result, we are once again seeking public input on the Return to Learn plan. Iowa Law currently requires schools to provide fully in-person learning. The other components of the district's Return to Learn plan will only be used as directed by State of Iowa and/or Iowa

Department of Education. Therefore, the district is proposing the following [ACSD Return to Learn Addendum](#) as an update to the existing plan.

The public is invited to [provide feedback](#) on the addendum utilizing the form below through January 17, 2022. The Ankeny Board of Education will then review the addendum at the January 18, 2022 board meeting.



Calendar Survey Results

School district staff, administration, and Board representatives meet annually to discuss and plan the school calendar for future school years. This year, parent and staff feedback on the length and structure of the school calendar was collected to provide valuable information for the committee as they plan for the 2022-2023 school year.

The results of the calendar surveys can be viewed here:

[First Calendar Survey](#)

[Second Calendar Survey](#)

The calendar survey committee is currently analyzing the survey results and preparing a recommendation to be presented at the February 15, 2022 Ankeny Board of Education meeting for a public hearing and a board vote.

Ankeny Schools Receive Top Rankings for Best Schools

[Niche.com](#) has released their 2022 rankings for the Best Schools in the Des Moines Area. Ankeny Schools received a number of honors, including:



- **#1 in Best Places to Teach in Des Moines Area**
- **#1 in Districts with the Best Teachers in Des Moines Area**
- #2 in Best School Districts in Polk County
- #2 in Safest School Districts in Polk County
- #2 in Best School Districts for Athletes in Iowa
- #1 in Best Public High Schools in Des Moines Area: Ankeny Centennial High School
- #1 in Best Public Middle Schools in Des Moines Area: Prairie Ridge Middle School
- #1 in Best Public Elementary Schools in Des Moines Area: Northeast Elementary

The [Best Public High Schools](#) ranking is based on rigorous analysis of academic and student life data from the U.S. Department of Education along with test scores, college data, and ratings collected from millions of Niche users.



January Virtual Backpack

Find this month's vBackpack [here!](#)


- [Camps and Scouts](#)
- [Educational Opportunities](#)



Ankeny Community School District

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It is the policy of the Ankeny Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact Ken Morris, Jr., Equity Director at 306 SW School Street, Ankeny, IA 50023, 515/965-9600 or kenneth.morris@ankenyschools.org. The grievance will then be directed to the appropriate administrator charged with managing the program or department specified in the grievance.

 306 SW School St, Ankeny, IA, ...  515-965-9600

 ankenyschools.org

