



**Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible**

**December/January 15-16**

**Words from the Principal**

Greetings YMS Parent(s):

We have had a fantastic first semester. Students have grown **academically**. Teachers have been constantly **challenging** them to think critically, be creative, problem solve and to collaborate with other students.

While we certainly have been busy growing academically, we also have seen tremendous growth **socially** and **emotionally** at YMS. The adults in this building pride themselves on developing the **whole child** as they navigate through some of the busiest times for change in their young lives.

As we finish our first semester this year and say goodbye to 2015 I would like to **ask for your help** in a few different areas to help **improve your child's experience at YMS**:

1. Remind your child(ren) that the **last few weeks** of this semester are **critical**. We have many important education topics to discuss and experiences to encounter to finish off a positive first semester. Encourage them to **run all the way through the finish line**.

2. Continue to foster a **growth mindset** at home. Encourage the process not the ability. Remind them that it is ok to fail, but **not OK to quit** and that it is always possible to **improve** any situation.
3. This is a **challenging time** for young people and sometimes they can have doubts about themselves. Help remind your child(ren) during this period of doubt that **the only thing that matters is how you see yourself**.
4. Now that the normal daily temperature has fallen please try to make sure your student(s) are **dressed for the weather**. Even though it might be a bit colder, most of the time we will be sending kids outside at noon recess. We will not go outside if it is dangerously cold but will send them out if only to, as my dad would say, "**blow the stink off of em**" and let them release some energy.

I hope you take time during the holiday break to enjoy family and friends. Thank you for all your effort to make this first semester at YMS one of the best for your child. I can't wait to finish off this fantastic first semester and then work hard to make the second semester even better than the first. Go Dukes!

Kenny Loosvelt, Principal  
[www.yorkpublic.org](http://www.yorkpublic.org)

**Merry Christmas to all from the staff at YMS!**

# Middle Years

Working Together for School Success



## Short Stops

### Social media?

If your tween wants a social media account, check age guidelines first. Children usually need to be 13 or older to join, and they may not yet understand the potential pitfalls. If you do allow it, have him “friend” you so you can keep an eye on things. Also, set rules about keeping personal information private.

### Be a community helper

’Tis the season of giving back, and teaching your child to help her community is a great lesson. As a family, watch for needs to meet, such as gift shopping for a sick neighbor or donating hats and gloves to a collection drive. Your middle grader could call local charities for opportunities.

### Shifting friendships

During middle school, it’s normal for friendships to change. If your tween grows apart from old friends, let him know that it’s common and it’s okay to feel sad. Encourage him to focus on getting to know new people through classes and activities. And since he may reconnect with his old friends down the road, he should remain friendly when he sees them.

### Worth quoting

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader.”  
*John Quincy Adams*

### Just for fun

**Q:** What can you catch but not throw?

**A:** A cold.



## Reading: On the case

When it comes to assigned reading, a little detective work can go a long way. Digging into a text and looking for clues will help your middle schooler understand and analyze what she’s reading. Suggest strategies like these.

### Go beyond what’s written

Authors may hint at something without saying it directly. Encourage your child to consider the context and use details to *infer*, or figure out what’s behind the words. For instance, if one character is building a time machine and another character says, “Yeah, good luck with that,” your youngster might infer that the second character believes the time machine won’t work. As she continues reading, she can look for stronger evidence that her inference was correct.

### Find the purpose

After reading a section in a textbook or nonfiction book, she could ask herself, “What was the author’s reason for writing that?” If your tween gets in this habit, she will automatically start to think about the author’s purpose (to entertain, to persuade, to inform), which will give her a



specific reason for reading. That can also help her connect on a deeper level to what she reads and cause her to think more critically about it.

### Pull out what’s confusing

Good readers think about their own thinking! As your middle schooler reads, have her highlight or mark with sticky notes any words or statements she doesn’t understand. Then, suggest that she reread them after she finishes the chapter, look up words, or ask classmates or her teacher for help. Rather than glossing over things she doesn’t “get,” she’ll figure out what the selection really means. 👍

## Winter pastimes

Need ideas for family fun as the weather turns chilly? Here are two good ones.

**1.** Make a hot chocolate station. Your child could put out a variety of ingredients for mixing into cocoa, such as vanilla extract, cinnamon, nutmeg, maple syrup, orange zest, or crushed peppermint candy. Taste each other’s concoctions, and sip your drinks while watching a movie.

**2.** Schedule a weekly puzzle night. Choose a jigsaw puzzle to work on together until it’s finished. Or make your own puzzles, and swap with each other. You might glue magazine pictures onto cardboard and cut them into pieces or search online for free jigsaw puzzle templates. 👍



## Expect respect

Your relationship with your tween will be more pleasant if respect is a regular part of it. Try these ways to encourage respectful behavior in daily life.

**Draw a line.** Let your child know that he's allowed to be mad at you, but he's not allowed to be disrespectful. For instance, while he can disagree with having to pick up his room, he can't raise his voice or stomp off sighing loudly. Explain the consequences of behaving that way, such as losing phone privileges or being grounded.



**Try again.** If he doesn't handle a situation with respect (say he yells, "That's so unfair!"), ask him to think of a better way to approach you. He could rephrase it by saying, "I'm sorry, but I don't agree" in a normal tone of voice. If he doesn't cooperate, don't get drawn into an argument. Tell him you'll talk when he's ready to be respectful. Then, walk away.

*Note:* Sometimes tweens and parents get caught in a negative cycle. If that happens, tell your youngster you'd like to start fresh. Discuss ways to be more respectful toward one another, including specific things each of you can do. Finally, set a positive tone by doing something together that you both enjoy. 🍌

## Consider the source

Reliable sources will help your child get the facts right when she writes research papers. Share these tips for finding good information:



■ Be aware of who created a source and whether that person or group is trustworthy. In general, she should be able to get solid information from educational institutions, reputable nonprofit organizations, government sources, and professional or academic journals.

■ Have her be sure the information is up to date. A book copyrighted in 1989 might say Pluto is a planet, when it's now labeled a dwarf planet. If she uses older sources, she should double-check information against current references.

■ Many local libraries subscribe to databases that offer prescreened, quality sources. Instead of plowing through Google results, she can use those databases to reach reliable information quickly. Have a librarian show her what's available and how to use it. 🍌



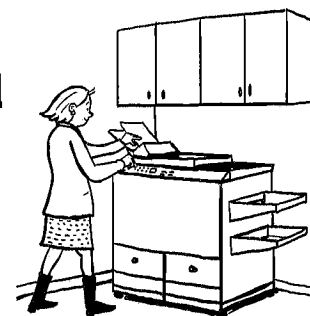
**Q & A**

## Stay involved at school

**Q** My seventh-grade daughter isn't thrilled with the idea of my volunteering at school, but I'd like to be involved somehow. Help!

**A** Your middle schooler may not want you showing up in her classroom, but you could still participate in her school. And in fact, she'll be better off if you do. Students whose parents are involved during middle school tend to have higher grades—and even are more likely to enroll in college.

Teachers may need help outside of class, so ask them to keep you in mind. Perhaps you can make copies or rearrange the room before a special activity. To find out about other volunteer opportunities, check notices from the school and from clubs your child participates in. You might opt in for text alerts from the drama club advisor, for example. Also, sign up for the PTO email list, and try to attend PTO meetings. 🍌



**Parent to Parent**

## Learning to advocate

My son Eric was diagnosed with dyslexia in third grade. I got used to speaking to teachers when he needed something or had a problem. But when he reached middle school, his counselor said letting him advocate for himself would prepare him to handle challenges down the road.

So before Eric's IEP meeting this fall, I had him write down what he wanted to discuss with the team. Then, we

role-played to help him get comfortable. He practiced explaining his goals, such as increasing his spelling accuracy, and what he thinks might make learning easier, like using a text reader. We also reviewed ways to respond if he doesn't understand something. ("Can you clarify that, please?")

Eric was a little nervous, but he got through it. Now we're working on having him approach teachers when he needs help. 🍌



## OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

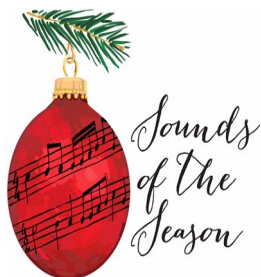
Resources for Educators,  
a division of CCH Incorporated  
128 N. Royal Avenue • Front Royal, VA 22630  
540-636-4280 • rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com  
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## HOLIDAY BAND CONCERT AND SOUP SUPPER

Rehearsals are under way for this year's Holiday Band Concert that will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, in the High School Theater. The concert will feature selections from the Middle School and High School Jazz and Concert Bands. There is no admission charge for the concert.

Our Middle and High School solo and small ensemble groups will be performing holiday music during a Soup Supper hosted by the Band Boosters Organization in the cafeteria prior to the concert. They will be serving chili or chicken noodle soup at a cost of \$5.00 per person from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.



## YHS/YMS CHOIR CONCERT

Come join us for the YHS & YMS Christmas Choir Concert. The students have been working very hard and are looking forward to giving you a great performance. It will be held on Monday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the York High School Theater. The concert will feature selections by the YMS 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade choirs and the Expressions Show Choir. The concert will also include the YHS Choirs, including the Dukes & Duchesses. This evening will fill your heart with song.

## The Wizard of the Mall is Coming to YMS

A group of eighth grade students are working to put together a play to be performed the last day of school before Christmas break. The play is *The Wizard of the Mall*. The story entails Auntie Em allowing Dorothy and her little bunny FuFu to go to the mall alone! Dorothy encounters some well know familiar characters. This story has a modern twist on an all-time favorite story.

## School Cancellation Information -- December 2015

In the event of a school closing, York Public Schools will communicate in numerous ways. Information can be found:

- On our website at [www.yorkpublic.org](http://www.yorkpublic.org)
- Listening to KAWL/KTMX Radio
- Watching NTV or KOLN/KGIN TV
- On the York Public Schools Facebook Page
- On Twitter at the hashtag of #yorkdukes
- Through our "NOTIFY ME" instant notification system you can sign up for at [www.yorkpublic.org](http://www.yorkpublic.org) (search for the NOTIFY ME tab on the left side of the homepage)
  - ♦ This will send you text messages and/or emails when decisions are made

Making decisions about full days, late starts, and/or snow days are never fun or easy. All you have to do is check social media and see all of the names we get called on questionable days! We do the best we can with the information and resources we have at the time. Please remember you can keep your child(ren) home on days that we have school and you think we shouldn't.

We are fortunate to be one of the few school districts in Nebraska that has an insulated bus barn that keeps all of our buses from freezing during those cold winter nights and early mornings. That, along with the fact we offer over 90 bus stops within town, and basically door-to-door service on most country routes, ensures that we can have school on "cold days" where other districts shut down. Most districts that shut down on "cold days" do so because their buses are left outside and they're unable to guarantee they will run the next day. Again, if you think we shouldn't have school on a "cold day" where other districts have shut down, please feel free to keep your child(ren) at home.

If we have any school cancellations this year, the first two won't be made up as they are allowed for in our existing calendar. For example, if we have two cancellations, school will still end on May 18<sup>th</sup> as already published on our school calendar. If we would have four cancellations, we would make up two days and school would end on May 20<sup>th</sup>.

We take the safety of our students and staff very seriously. We make what we feel is the best decision for the school district as a whole during these difficult scenarios. Please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments, or concerns.

Go Dukes,  
*Mike Lucas*

Mike Lucas  
Superintendent of Schools  
[mike.lucas@yorkdukes.org](mailto:mike.lucas@yorkdukes.org)  
402-362-6655 ext. 405

**It is not too late to get your Flu shot.** Call the school nurse if you need help in finding a Flu Clinic.

**Remind your child to eat breakfast every morning.** Eating in the morning helps with thinking which leads to better grades. Breakfast also helps you make better food choices all day long. We see many students with headaches and upset stomachs who had not had anything for breakfast.



**Here are some suggestions to stay healthy through the cold and dry winter months.**

**Dry Sinuses-** Cold, dry air pulls moisture from your mouth and nose, leaving your nasal passages dried out and your throat dry. Dry nostrils are more likely to crack and give you a nosebleed.

Because your nose needs gooey mucus to trap viruses and other icky invaders before they can get you sick, dry nostrils can also make you more vulnerable to colds, sinus infections, and the flu. That's especially a problem in winter, when bacteria and viruses can tend to linger longer in the dry air after someone coughs or sneezes.

When you turn up the thermostat in your home, your heating system kicks up clouds of dust, pollen, and other allergens that can inflame your sinuses. Cold, dry air plus those allergens can also irritate your airways. For some people with asthma, cold and dry air can lead to a narrowing of breathing passages and trigger an attack.

**Thirsty Skin-** Cold air sucks out skin's moisture, which is why young, smooth hands can look older in the winter months. Taking hot showers can worsen dry, itchy skin by removing the natural layer of oil that preserves and protects the skin's moisture.

Your lips also take a beating in the winter. The cold wind outside, combined with the dry air inside can leave you with dry, chapped lips.

**Here are a few tips for putting the moisture back into your home, and your body:**

- ❖ Use a humidifier. Running a humidifier in your home will add moisture to dry, heated air. The moist air will help keep your skin, mouth, and nose lubricated, and helps prevent those nasty static shocks. Your goal is to aim for a comfortable home humidity level of between 30% and 50%. Don't crank up the humidifier higher than that, though, or you could develop another problem -- mold, fungi, dust mites, and other tiny critters. Make sure to keep your humidifier clean so that it doesn't send dust and germs spewing into your house.
- ❖ Seal your home. Prevent the cold, dry air outside from paying you an unwelcome visit. Insulate your home so you don't have to turn up the heat. Close any air leaks in doors, windows, attics, and crawl spaces with caulk, spray foam, or weather stripping. Sealing off air leaks will also



help you save money on your monthly heating bill, because you'll feel warm and cozy enough to turn down the thermostat a few notches.

- ❖ Hydrate often. Keep your skin and mouth moist by drinking water throughout the day. Don't like water? Tea and juice are also good ways to rehydrate.
- ❖ Shorten your showers. Long, hot showers might feel great on frigid winter mornings, but the heat and steam can really dry out your skin. Turn the water temperature down to warm -- not hot -- and use a gentle soap. Get out as soon as you're clean, or under 15 minutes, whichever comes first.
- ❖ Moisturize. Rub a thick oil-based moisturizer onto your skin frequently each day, especially after you take a shower or bath. The oil in the product will lock moisture into your skin and keep it from drying out. Moisturizers come in different forms, but ointments will provide the most protection for dry skin. Make sure to apply moisturizing sunscreen with SPF 30 to exposed skin before going outside. (YES – even in winter) Also apply a lip balm or petroleum jelly to protect against chapped lips. Help keep your nasal passageways moist by using salt water (saline) drops or rubbing a little petroleum jelly (Vaseline) into each nostril gently with a cotton swab.

Other ways to keep students happy and healthy through the winter months.....wash hands often, cough into your elbow, eat more foods with Vitamin C like oranges and juices, drink plenty of water, make sure they wear ear protection like hats and ear bands, wear gloves/mittens and dress in layers to stay warm when outside. Be very careful about dosages of over the counter medications and double check with your doctor or pharmacist so you are not giving them too much. Combination medications that say they treat cold symptoms and temperature have different medications mixed together so read the active ingredients carefully. Feel free to contact either school nurse for any questions or concerns you may have.

### **Is your students back pack too heavy?**

Carrying a backpack that is too heavy may cause back, neck and shoulder pain, headaches along with tingling, numbness and weakness in the hands. Long term affects are early development of poor posture, damage to the spine such as hunched back, scoliosis, muscle spasms and chronic back pain

Here are some steps to minimize the chances that carrying a backpack will cause your child back pain or other health problems:

- limiting the weight your child carries in a backpack to 10-20% of his body weight
- buying a backpack that has wide, padded shoulder straps and a waste belt
- avoiding messenger type, single strap bags for your child to carry his school books and supplies
- encouraging your child to wear his backpack over both shoulders
- consider using a backpack with wheels
- Although back pain is becoming more common in older adolescents, it is not as common in younger children and may be a sign of a more serious problem, such as spondylolysis, spondylolisthesis, disk herniation, diskitis, a sport's injury, or a tumor or infection. Don't assume that your child's back pain is caused by a heavy backpack, especially if the pain is very severe or persistent or if it lingers even after you lighten your child's backpack load.

# December 2015



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 2:00 Dismissal	3 7 & 8 WR - Home vs Seward @ YHS 4:00 pm 8 GBB - Home vs Aurora @ YMS 4:30 pm 7 GBB @ Aurora 4:30 pm	4	5
6	7 8 GBB - Home vs Seward @ YMS 4:30 pm 7 GBB @ Seward M.S. 4:30 pm 7 & 8 WR @ Central City Invite 5:00 pm	8  Band Boosters Soup Supper 4:00-7:00 pm YHS GYM Commons YHS/YMS Christmas Band Concert 7:00 pm YHS Theater	9 2:00 Dismissal	10	11 State Skills USA M/S Conference in Grand Island	12 7 & 8 WR @ Boone Central Inv. 9:30 am
13	14  YMS/YHS Christmas Choir Concert 7:00 pm YHS Theater Board of Education Mtg.	15 7 & 8 GBB @ Beatrice H/S 4:00 pm	16 2:00 Dismissal	17	18 End of 2nd Quarter	19 7 & 8 WR @ Seward Invite 9:00 am
20	21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve	25  Christmas	26
	..... NO SCHOOL .....	..... NO SCHOOL .....	Christmas Break	.....	.....	
27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve		
	..... NO SCHOOL .....	..... NO SCHOOL .....	Christmas Break	.....		

Wishing you a Merry Christmas!! School Resumes January 4, 2016





## Breakfast Choices

Available every day, breakfast includes:

- Breakfast entrée or Choice of cereals with toast
- Fruit
- 100% Fruit Juice
- Milk choices



## Fruit and Juice Available Every Day

Start your day off right

## Additional Middle & High School Choices offered daily

- Smucker's Uncrustable
- Dutch Waffle
- Cheese Pretzel

## Stop & Go Breakfast-High School Only

**STOP** by the cafeteria. Bag your breakfast, and **GO** on with your day!

### Choices Daily:

- Pancake or French Toast Minis
- MiniCinis
- Frudel
- Yogurt with Goldfish Grahams






Includes Fruit and 100% juice choice and milk

This breakfast is available for students that qualify for free or reduced price meals.

## Breakfast Meal Prices & Extras

Student Breakfast	\$1.35
Adult Breakfast	\$2.05
Extra Breakfast Entrée	\$1.00
Extra Cereal	\$0.85
Extra Toast	\$0.25
Extra Milk	\$0.45

Menus are subject to change without notice.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
	1 A. Sausage Gravy over Biscuit B. Cereal Choices and Toast  Juice Choices Pineapple Milk Choices	2 A. Waffles with Syrup B. Cereal Choices and Toast  Juice Choices Mixed Fruit Milk Choices	3 A. Breakfast Pizza B. Cereal Choices and Toast  Juice Choices Pineapple Milk Choices	4 A. Fresh Baked Cinnamon Roll B. Cereal Choices and Toast  Juice Choices Applesauce Milk Choices
7 A. Breakfast Pizza B. Cereal Choices and Toast  Juice Choices Applesauce Milk Choices	8 A. Egg & Cheese Biscuit Sandwich B. Cereal Choices and Toast  Juice Choices Pineapple Milk Choices	9 A. Fresh Baked Cinnamon Roll B. Cereal Choices and Toast  Juice Choices Sliced Peaches Milk Choices	10 A. Breakfast Sliders B. Cereal Choices and Toast  Juice Choices Sliced Pears Milk Choices	11 A. Iced Long John B. Cereal Choices and Toast  Juice Choices Apple Wedges Milk Choices
14 A. French Toast Sticks B. Cereal Choices and Toast  Juice Choices Sliced Pears Milk Choices	15 A. Egg & Cheese Taco Roll B. Cereal Choices and Toast  Juice Choices Mixed Fruit Milk Choices	16 A. Oatmeal with Toppings B. Cereal Choices and Toast  Juice Choices Pineapple Milk Choices	17 A. Breakfast Pizza B. Cereal Choices and Toast  Juice Choices Sliced Peaches Milk Choices	18 A. Fresh Baked Cinnamon Roll B. Cereal Choices and Toast  Juice Choices Applesauce Milk Choices
21	22 	23	24	25 
28	29 	30	31 <b>Classes Resume 1/04/2016</b>	

**Questions or comments** - Contact Mitch Novak, Foodservice Director at 402-363-9169 or [mitch@lunchtimesolutions.com](mailto:mitch@lunchtimesolutions.com)  
Applications for Free and Reduced price meal are available in all building offices.

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*



### Fruit & Veggie Bar & Milk Choices

Unlimited fruits and vegetables and choice of milk are included with the lunch meal everyday.

Each student is required to have 1/2 cup of fruits or vegetables on their tray.



Look for the Farmer's Market Logo on this month's menu for the featured Farmers Market selection.



Learn more about this month's Selection on the poster in the dining area or at:

<http://server.lunchtimesolutions.com:81/farmersmarket.pdf>

### Other Daily Entrée Choices :

#### C. Sub/Salad/Sandwich Entrées

**M-W** Sub Sandwich Choice  
**T-Th** Entree Salad Choice  
**F** Sandwich Choice

Choices vary. See menu board for details.

#### D. Deli Wrap Entrées

**M** Combo Deli  
**T** Fajita Chicken  
**W** Turkey Deli  
**Th** Ham Deli  
**F** Grilled Chicken

#### E. Vegetarian Entrées

**M-W** Vegetarian Salad  
**T-Th-F** Fruit, Yogurt & Cheese Plate  
All E. include breadsticks

### Lunch Meal Prices & Extras

MS Lunch	\$2.70	Extra Entrée	\$1.75
Chef Entrée	\$2.00	Extra Side	\$0.50
Adult Lunch	\$3.40	Extra Milk	\$0.45

Adult **ONE TRIP** Fruit & Veggie Bar \$1.75

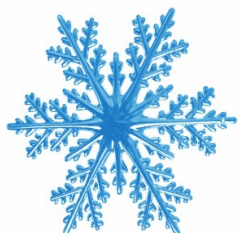
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Menus are subject to change without notice.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
	1 A. Hot Ham & Cheese Sandwich B. Pizza  Caribbean Style Yuca 	2 A. Home-style Cheese Quesadilla and Beef Enchilada Soup B. Crispy Chicken Sandwich  Black Beans	3 A. Home-style Cavatini B. Mini Corn Dogs  Green Beans Sugar Cookie	4 A. Home-style Golden Macaroni & Cheese B. Crispy Chicken Nuggets  Peas Carnival Cookie
7 A. Cheeseburger B. Home-style Scalloped Potatoes with Ham and Dinner Roll  Green Beans	8 A. Pizza Hut Pizza B. Toasted Cheese Sandwich and Tomato Soup  Mixed Vegetables 	9 A. Home-style Meatloaf and Dinner Roll B. Crispy Chicken Nuggets and Dinner Roll  Mashed Potatoes with Gravy	10 A. Hot Pepperoni Sub B. Grilled Chicken Sandwich  Baked Beans Chocolate Chip Cookie	11 A. Taco in a Bag B. Hot Dog  Chili Lime Corn Cinnamon Bread Stick
14 A. Chicken Fajitas B. Pork Fritter Sandwich  Black Beans	15 A. Pizza B. Taco Burger  Peas	16 A. Home-style Spaghetti with Meat Sauce B. Crispy Chicken Sandwich  Green Beans	17 <b>HOLIDAY MEAL</b> A. Baked Ham Slice and Dinner Roll B. Crispy Chicken Nuggets and Dinner Roll Scalloped Potatoes Golden Corn Holiday Cookie	18 A. Home-style Tater Hot Dish and Dinner Roll B. Corn Dog  Steamed Carrots Gelatin Dessert
21	22	23	24	25
				
28	29	30	31	
			<b>Classes Resume</b> <b>1/04/2016</b>	

This institution is an equal opportunity employer and provider.



# January 2016

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 NEW YEAR'S DAY NO SCHOOL Christmas Break	2
3	4 School Resumes  G	5 B	6 2:00 Dismissal G	7 B	8 G	9
10	11 Board of Education Mtg. B	12 G	13 2:00 Dismissal B	14 G	15 B	16
17	18 NO SCHOOL MLK In-Service Day Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	19 8 BBB @ Aurora 4:30 pm G	20 2:00 Dismissal B	21 7 BBB @ Beatrice M/S 4:00 pm 8 BBB - Home vs Beatrice @ YMS 4:00 pm G	22 B	23 7 & 8 BBB - York Hoopla Tourney 7 @ YHS 8 @ YHS 10:00 am
24	25 Board of Education Mtg. G	26 B	27 2:00 Dismissal G	28 B	29 G	30 7 & 8 BBB @ Hastings St. Cecilia 7-9:00/8-10:00 am
31						