

Heartland Community Schools



Annual Report for 2013-14

December, 2014

A note from Mr. Brad Best, Superintendent

“Thank you for your continued support ...”

The 2013-2014 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://reportcard.education.ne.gov/Default_State.aspx. Once there click on school district and type in Heartland.

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 2014-15 school year, the amount of tax dollars that we asked for actually decreased 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.

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.

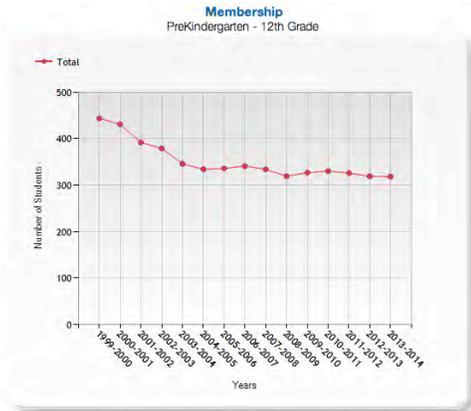


About the Heartland Community Schools

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

Demographics

District Characteristics		
District Data	State Statistics	District Statistics
Poverty Percentage	45	28
English Language Learners Percentage	6	0
Special Education Percentage	16	26
Graduation Rate Percentage	89	90
Attendance Percentage	95	96
Teachers Highly Qualified Percentage	98	97



Enrollment Trends

The enrollment trend 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. Please look at our reading score improvement later in this report.

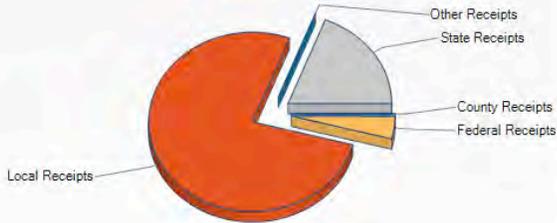
We also launched an ambitious program to put technology into the hands of our students. Each teacher and students in grades 7-12 has been issued a laptop, the students and teachers in grades K-6 now have access to iPads at the ratio of two students per device, and we have upgraded our network speeds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



Finances

Providing Quality Instruction

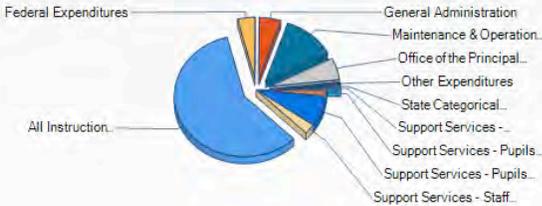
Receipts
2012-2013 School Year



2012-2013 Receipts

	Receipts	Percent
County Receipts	\$4,247.42	0.08 %
Federal Receipts	\$217,716.98	4.02 %
Local Receipts	\$4,154,292.08	76.74 %
Other Receipts	\$0.00	0.00 %
State Receipts	\$1,037,348.04	19.16 %
Total Receipts	\$5,413,604.52	

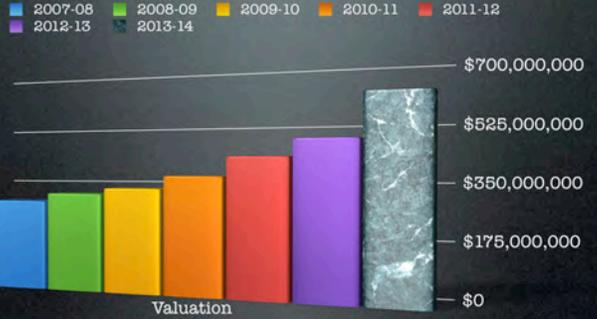
Expenditures
2012-2013 School Year



2012-2013 Expenditures

	Expenditures	Percent
All Instruction Expenditures	\$2,890,636.83	58.53 %
Federal Expenditures	\$200,415.07	4.06 %
General Administration	\$248,282.53	5.03 %
Maintenance & Operation Expenditures	\$604,161.01	12.23 %
Office of the Principal Expenditures	\$290,205.94	5.88 %
Other Expenditures	\$40,000.00	0.81 %
State Categorical Programs	\$20,551.92	0.42 %
Support Services - Business	\$22,448.10	0.45 %
Support Services - Pupils Expenditures	\$88,996.75	1.80 %
Support Services - Pupils Transportation	\$403,248.18	8.17 %
Support Services - Staff Expenditures	\$129,722.12	2.63 %
Total Expenditures	\$4,938,668.45	

Assessed Valuation



Tax Asking History All Funds

	Local Property Tax Asking	Change	Percentage Change
2007-08	\$3,056,724		
2008-09	\$3,375,490	\$318,766	10.4%
2009-10	\$3,574,114	\$198,624	5.9%
2010-11	\$3,969,344	\$395,230	11.1%
2011-12	\$4,178,094	\$208,750	5.3%
2012-13	\$4,464,957	\$286,863	6.9%
2013-14	\$4,688,011	\$223,054	5.0%

Tax Levy History

Fund	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
General	\$1.0637	\$1.0570	\$1.0576	\$1.0501	\$0.9195	\$0.8745	\$0.7149
Quality Capital		\$0.0234	\$0.0203	\$0.0196	\$0.0184	\$0.0140	\$0.0234
Special Building				\$0.0316	\$0.0316	\$0.0345	\$0.0253
Total	\$1.0637	\$1.0804	\$1.0779	\$1.1013	\$0.9695	\$0.9229	\$0.7637

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.

State standards assessments

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

Teacher In-Service Days



We are very appreciative of the work of our school board and the time that we are allowed for teacher in-service days. This time is invaluable in providing the opportunity for teachers and administrators to take part in evaluating achievement data, discussing school improvement initiatives, and receiving training to become even more effective in the classroom.

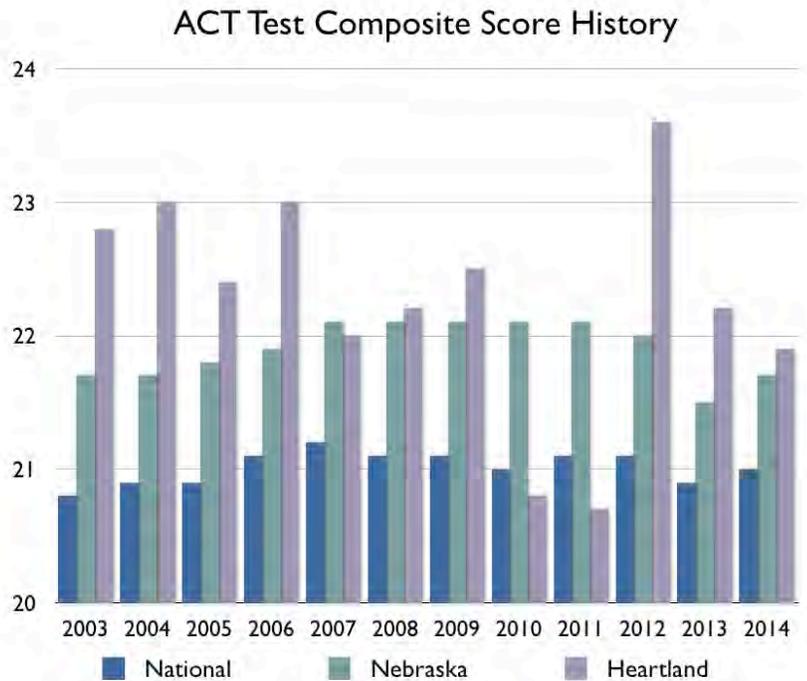
National Exams

Heartland Students Continue to Achieve on the ACT Test

The ACT test is taken by nearly 3.5 million students across the country each year. The test is intended to measure a student's likelihood of succeeding at college-level coursework and consists of four sections: English, reading, mathematics, and science reasoning. The highest possible score is 36.

Over 70% of students in Nebraska high schools, including Heartland, take the ACT exam. When compared to 12 other states that have over 70% of their students take the ACT exam, Nebraska ranks first in the group.

Students in Heartland show a trend well-above the national and state averages on the ACT exam and are above this top ranked state average most years.



NWEA MAP Testing

The MAP tests are given to students in grades 3-9, twice each year. The tests, in the areas of language arts, math, and science, are computer based and adaptive in nature. As students answer questions, the test asks easier or more difficult questions based on the student response.

Our students showed growth throughout the year at a pace equal to or higher than the national average and teachers continue to monitor and discuss these results multiple times each year.

School Improvement Goals

Beginning in the 2013-14 school year, the staff revisited the district's school improvement plan, deriving goals from student achievement data. Once they have identified areas of success and concern, specific school improvement plans will be developed which contain research-based initiatives for use in the classroom.

Data will be collected during this improvement cycle and adjustments to the strategies will be made based upon this data. From early discussions, the areas of focus over the next few years will be reading, vocabulary, re-aligning the curriculum to the state standards, and the infusion of technology into the classroom.

State Standards & Rankings

Growth is Encouraging

Nebraska’s accountability system ranks school districts by their students’ average scale scores on state tests. The spring of 2013 saw the second year of state level state rankings of school districts. All students in the state of Nebraska took the same “one chance” test in the subject areas of reading, mathematics, science, and writing.

The overall NePAS score for each district was based upon a formula developed by the Department of Education. The formula varies somewhat depending on grade level, but primarily focuses upon: improvement, growth, scale score, percentage of students participating in the test, and graduation rate.

IMPROVEMENT ranks districts by the differences in the average reading and math scale scores of different students in the same grade. GROWTH ranks districts by the differences in average reading and math scale scores of the same students this year to last year.

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 data from one year to the next on some tests.

Subject	Grades 3-5			Grades 6-8			Grade 11			
	Scale Scores & Rankings	Our Score	State Score	Our Rank	Our Score	State Score	Our Rank	Our Score	State Score	Our Rank
Reading		125	118	60	132	120	25	115	110	119
Math		123	112	46	119	107	51	96	102	186
Science		109	106	116	114	105	59	93	103	217

** The state ranked 248 schools in grades 3-5 & 6-8 and 230 schools in grades 9-12.*

Out of the 249 school districts that were ranked with the new system in all areas, Heartland’s ranking of the overall average of grades 3-12 were as follows: 41st in reading, 66th in math, 168th in science.

We are encouraged by our growth in reading & math:

Reading Growth	Heartland	State
Reading Improvement - Grades 3-12	6.38 pts	4.15 pts
Math Improvement - Grades 3-12	5.57 pts	1.41 pts

State Testing of Standards

While we realize that there is work to be done to improve our rankings, we have seen a nice pattern of growth in our students' performance on the state exams.

The graphs that follow illustrate our marks in relation to those of the state averages.

KUDOS!

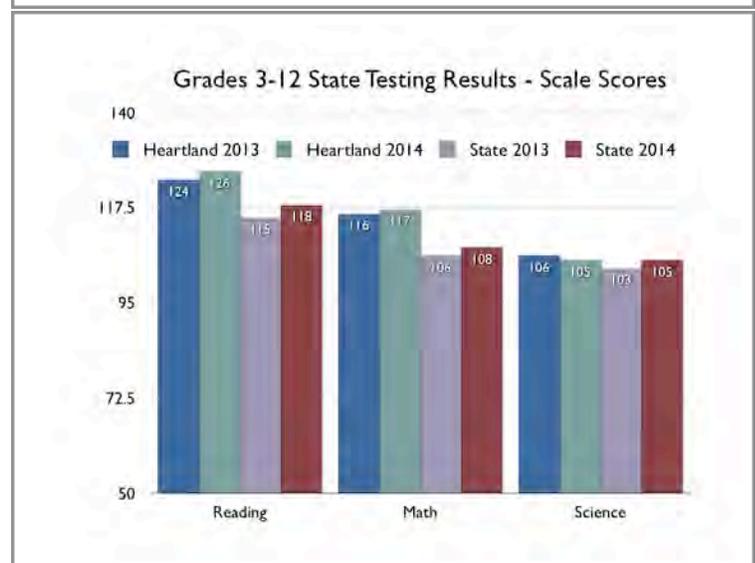
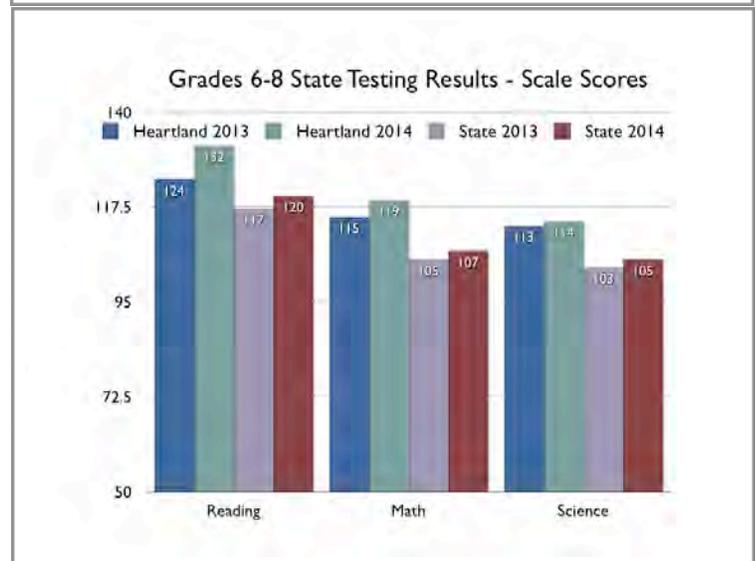
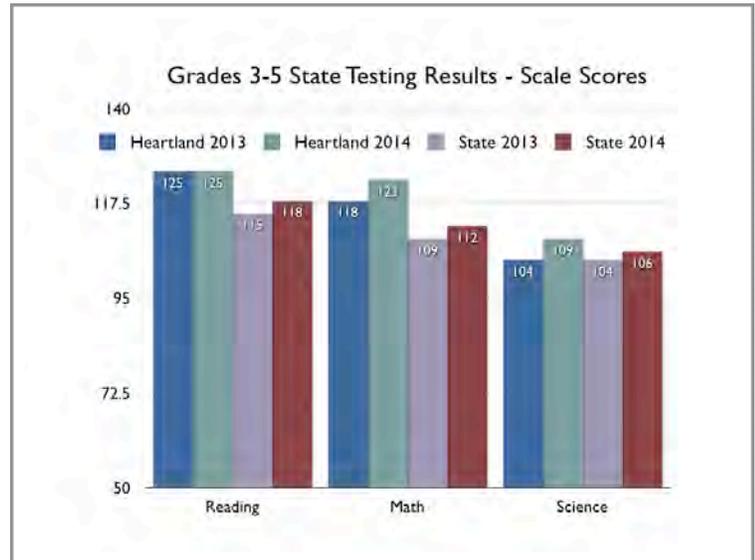
There were some outstanding performances in several grade levels that we would like to celebrate:

Reading

- 100% of last year's 3rd graders met the state standard! In grades 7 & 8, 95% met the standard.

Math

- Over 90% of students in grades 4, 5, & 7 exceeded the state standard in mathematics.



State Writing Exam

The state writing exam is given to all 4th, 8th, and 11th graders in Nebraska. The writings are scored at the state level each year and are focused upon the narrative, descriptive, and persuasive styles of writing.

Due to testing software issues at the state level, we did not receive results from this last year.

State Standards

Growth in State Reading Scale Scores

In the fall of 2012, a new reading program was implemented in our elementary grades. Since the year prior to our introduction of the new program, our growth on the state exams has greatly outpaced that of the state average growth.

Success precipitates from hard work and a strong and aligned curriculum. We will be looking at our math and science curriculums over the next couple of years.

Reading Score Growth	Heartland	State Avg
Class of 2018 Growth Since 4th Grade	46	10
Class of 2019 Growth Since 3rd Grade	42	25
Class of 2020 Growth Since 3rd Grade	32	15
Class of 2021 Growth Since 3rd Grade	18	12

Did You Know ...

- 🔊 Over 45% of our teachers hold Masters’ degrees and have over 15 years of experience, on average?
- 🔊 Over 90% of our students attend a post-secondary institution?
- 🔊 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?

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>

Check Us Out On The Web

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/heartlandcommunitieschools>



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.