

January 2026

# Goldbug News



Fowler Grade School, Fowler Kansas

## Important Dates:

- \* Jan. 5-school resumes
- \* Jan. 6-Science Fair
- \* Jan. 6-Site Council
- \* Jan. 12-BOE meeting
- \* Jan. 22-Field Trip to Boothill
- \* Jan. 26-Field Trip to Hilmar Cheese Co.
- \* Jan. 29-Progress reports issued
- \* Feb. 9-BOE meeting

*Don't forget to shop Schoolstore.com to help raise funds for our school activities.*

## Happy New Year!

Reflection on the first semester in Fowler: Wow- I have learned so much and it has been exhilarating to say the least. I am so proud to say that I work for USD 225 and call myself a Goldbug.

December was a busy month for the Goldbugs. The Goldbugs performed for parents and community members during the music program. We hosted a parent's night out and

Paint a Penguin sessions for students as well as ending the first semester.

A huge shout-out to Ashley Boyd and the parents and volunteers that made the School Carnival a huge success. The students had a blast.

January will be just as busy with field trips to Boot Hill and Hilmar Cheese Company. January 29th, teachers will

send home progress reports for students.

Soon we will be deciding on the 2026-2027 school year calendar. It has been suggested that instead of having Fridays off, it would be better to schedule Monday's off. What are your thoughts on this? Let me know at [aricks@usd225.org](mailto:aricks@usd225.org).

It's a great day to be a Goldbug!

## A Sticky Wicket—as they say

I have been in the education profession since the 1990's as a paraprofessional first and then in 2002, I transitioned to a teacher position. Education has changed significantly since those days and even more since I attended grades K-12 as a student. Back in my student days, the schools in Kansas, for the most part, followed the same norms. These norms were: a 5 day school week, a 6.5 hour school day, a minimum of 185 student contact days, students were held accountable for completing assignments, maintaining passing grades, memorization of facts, and exhibiting acceptable behaviors at school. And in my day, if you were in trouble at school, it was worse trouble at home.

We have decreased the number of student contact days, we have changed classroom requirements and the perspective has shifted from what did the student do to what did the school do to cause this to happen. We need to get back to the mission of EDUCATION! Our mission at Fowler is to build relationships that facilitate accountability, responsibility, respect, and enhance academic and social growth for lifelong success. My personal mission is "doing what is best for every student, every day in every way". I want to take Fowler Grade School back to the basics and do what is best for our students. I have worked in districts with a 4 day school week and a 5 day school week. As a staff member I love the 4 day work week, but is it what is best for our students? According to KSDE, in "*rural*/districts, four-day weeks **do not appear to improve academic outcomes** and may be associated with **lower performance on standardized tests, particularly ACT** than five-day schools". In order to do what is best for kids, I believe that Fowler should return to a 5 day school week with a shorter school day. Some will disagree with me, but Fowler test scores have basically been stagnant for the last few years. We need to move the needle and in order to do that, we must make changes. As you know, a popular definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result. Another change needed is the reduction of electronic device usage during the school day. Research shows that paper / pencil learning is more beneficial than device usage. That is not to say that devices are not beneficial when used appropriately. We need to get back to the basics and teach our students how to think independently, how to properly use technology as a tool to aid them, and how to make the best choice possible for the situation at the time.

What are your thoughts on this? Please let me know at [aricks@usd225.org](mailto:aricks@usd225.org) or come by the school and let's chat.

"Growing Fowler: One Goldbug at a Time"

## KESA 2.0 Action Plan for 2025-2026



I have been notified that our KESA 2.0 for the next 12 months has been approved and Fowler USD 225 maintains State Accreditation. I am very proud of our staff and all of the hard work they have completed in order to fulfill our action plan steps and maintain momentum as we move forward.

### Goal for Fowler USD 225

I have been asked by patrons what are my goals for Fowler USD 225 for the new year. For me I like to use the word vision since in my mind the vision drives the goals and the goals manifest the vision. My vision is that USD 225 has the absolute best PreK-6th grade Elementary School in the state of Kansas. My long term vision is for USD 225 to be a thriving PreK-12 attendance center and that students WANT to be in here. For

2026 to achieve my vision we are focusing on rigorous instruction and use of high quality materials, limiting the amount of screen time during school and actively engaging students in learning.

However for this to happen, we must have students to educate. Kansas birthrates have been declining for the last 7 years which impacts our enrollment. The state of Kansas

understands this and has supports in place to help with this trend. However, when we lose local students to other districts, that impacts our school directly. I want to grow Fowler School. If you have input on ways to improve and grow our school, please contact me. We want Fowler Grade School to continue to be a viable, thriving school district for many years to come. Amy Ricks 620-309-8278 or [aricks@usd225.org](mailto:aricks@usd225.org)

### Second Semester—What is Next?

The 22nd of January is the day our students will tour Boot Hill Museum. Students will leave at 12:15 and return by 2:45. Due to the limited time to tour the museum, students will not be allowed to make pur-

chases. The 26th of January is the day the students will tour Hilmar Dairy. They will leave the school at 8:45 and return to eat lunch at the school. NO personal electronics will be allowed on these trips.

The Regional Science Fair is Feb. 7th in Liberal. We will provide transpor-

tation. This is a long day and devices will be permitted.

February 12th we will host Donuts with Grownups from 7am-7:30am and the 16th is Family Fun Night.

Exciting things are happening!



Fowler Grade School

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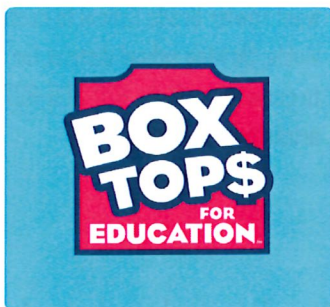
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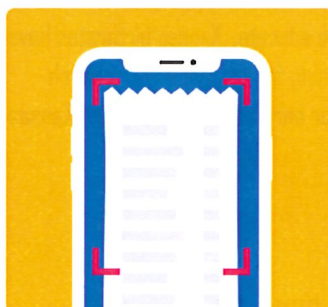
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