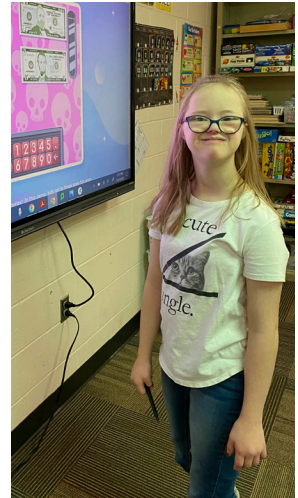
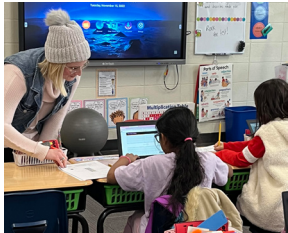


# FOUNDATION FOCUS

2022 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER





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**Elkhorn Public Schools Foundation Staff:** Kristina Werner, Melanie Lucks, Amy Whorlow, Stacey L. Falk, Sara McArdle, Susan Lumsden, Genice Chochon, and Carol Monnier.



**Elkhorn Kids Campus Staff**



Dear Friends of the Foundation,

Our team would like to wish you all a happy holiday season and a peaceful and prosperous New Year. As I reflect on 2022, I am extremely grateful the support of our Elkhorn community.

Whether you reserved the Alumni Center for a celebration, purchased a scoreboard ad for your business, participated in Golf Fore Grants, made a donation to our Elkhorn Public Schools Staff TEAM Campaign, bid on an item during our annual Bids for Kids fundraiser, attended Hall of Fame, or contributed to our Scholarship Program, THANK YOU for your continued support of the Foundation during this past year.

As our school District and its needs continue to grow, please know your support is more important than ever. Your contributions help fund Foundation programs like Classroom Grants, Math & Reading Assistance, Scholarships, Teacher Tuition Reimbursement, our Kids in Need Fund, and more. We invite you to learn more about our programs by reading the stories that we've included in this newsletter. These programs would not be possible without the generosity of people like you!

We are looking forward to 2023 as we continue to serve our Elkhorn students, teachers, staff, and community.

With gratitude,  
Stacey L. Falk & the Foundation Team

# EXECUTIVE MESSAGE

*The Elkhorn Public Schools Foundation promotes student achievement and the unity of our community and its public schools by encouraging, supporting, and recognizing excellence in innovative education, quality school programs, and civic involvement.*



*Because of donors like you...*



**63** Classroom Grants totaling \$157,000 were awarded for the 2022-2023 school year.

63

3,057



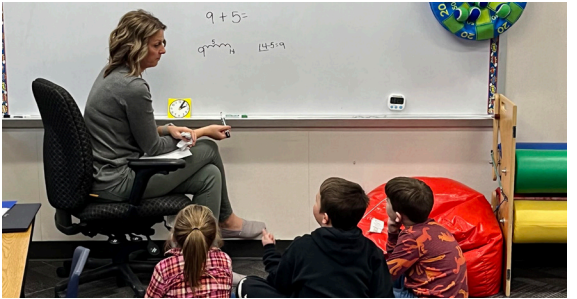
**417** Scholarships were awarded to the Class of 2022 on behalf of the Foundation, Elkhorn families, businesses, and organizations totaling \$508,550.

417

127



**2,162** Advanced Placement Tests were subsidized by the Foundation during the 2021-2022 school year.



**3,057** Before/after-school Math & Reading Assistance sessions were fully funded by the Foundation during the 2021-2022 school year.



**127** Elkhorn Public Schools Staff utilized our tuition reimbursement program during the 2021-2022 school year, totaling \$37,500.

2,162



# How Does Your Support Make a Difference in the Elkhorn Public Schools Community?

## Classroom Grants

We enrich Elkhorn Public Schools education by providing Classroom Grants to all 20 schools in the District, impacting Elkhorn students at every grade level.

## Math & Reading Assistance

We fund the before and after-school Math & Reading Assistance groups that take place in Elkhorn's elementary schools. These clubs help students gain confidence and improve their overall math and reading comprehension through small group tutoring.

## Scholarship Program

We administer scholarships on behalf of community businesses, families, and organizations. Our scholarship program has benefited thousands of Elkhorn Public Schools Alumni.

## Elkhorn Public Schools Staff Tuition Reimbursement

We encourage our Elkhorn teachers and staff to prioritize their continued education by providing partial tuition reimbursement. The Foundation provides thousands of dollars in tuition reimbursement every year.

## Kids in Need

We provide financial assistance to Elkhorn families in need, ensuring financial hardships do not stand in the way of our students' physical, social, and emotional needs or their ability to achieve success within our schools.

*If you're interested in making a contribution,  
please visit [www.elkhornfoundation.org](http://www.elkhornfoundation.org)*



# Making a Difference with Classroom Grants

**M**ichaela Koenig is a Resource Teacher at Sagewood Elementary. She has been a teacher in the Elkhorn Public Schools District for eight years, providing special education services for students in kindergarten through fifth grade. She also is a “Battle of the Books” sponsor for fourth and fifth graders, and a 2022-2023 Elkhorn Public Schools Foundation (EPSF) Classroom Grant recipient.

The Community Field Trip & Books Classroom Grant for Sagewood Elementary allows

her language group students to learn about their community and develop new communication skills using their voice or communication devices.

“Our students are able to use the books they read to learn about different places in our community,” said Koenig. “As they read the books, they learn valuable early literacy skills such as turning pages and using their fingers to track words as we read.”

In October, the students were able to apply their newly



Michaela Koenig's Language Group outside of the Lied Jungle at Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo.



acquired communication skills and knowledge about their community at Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo. The students practiced labeling and describing animals while observing their actions at each animal exhibit that they toured. The students also utilized the opportunity to engage in conversations with each other about the animals and their habitats.

Later this year, Koenig's students will have the opportunity to follow a grocery list to purchase items for a recipe. They will also visit Sam and Louie's Italian Restaurant in the spring to order or make a slice of pizza while practicing their social skills using their voices or communication devices while out and about in the community.

***"This grant provides valuable opportunities for my students to use their language skills in different environments," said Koenig.***

"We practice language at school, but so much of what we practice applies to places outside of school. This grant allows our students to use what they are learning at school and apply it in different, exciting places."

In the future, Koenig said that she would love to continue the Community Field Trips and Books Classroom Grant for her language groups. There are also some additional programs that she would like to consider

purchasing that would be beneficial to building language and literacy skills.

Koenig's grant is just one of 63 EPSF Classroom Grants totaling \$157,000 that were awarded to all 20 Elkhorn Public Schools during the 2022-2023 school year. Our annual Golf Fore Grants

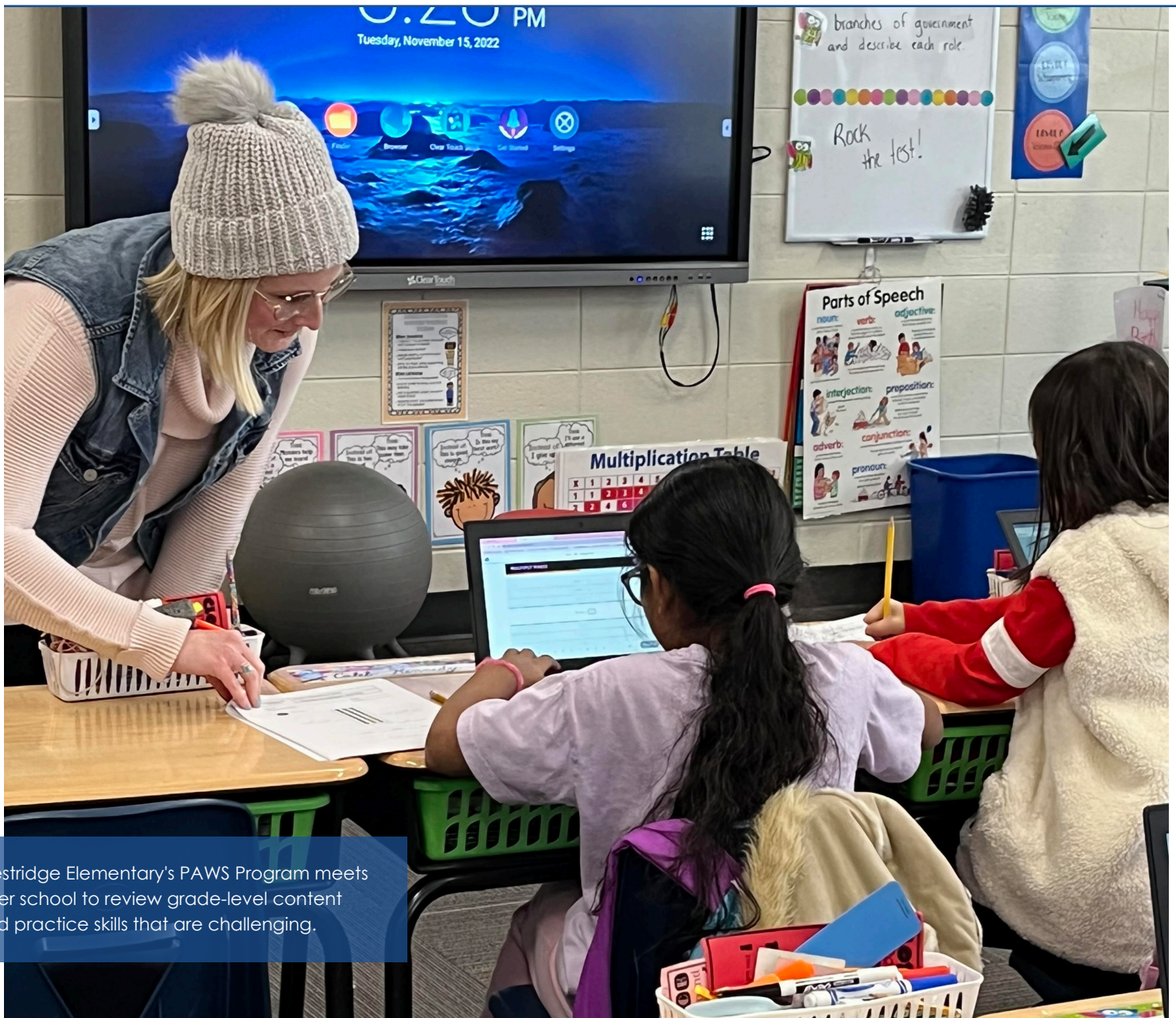
event is the main fundraiser for our Classroom Grants program. This year, the event raised over \$56,000, thanks to the generosity of our sponsors and participants.

If you are interested in making a contribution to our Classroom Grants program, please visit our website.



After observing the giraffes, students had the opportunity to use their voices or communication device to talk about and describe them.





Westridge Elementary's PAWS Program meets after school to review grade-level content and practice skills that are challenging.

## Students Gaining Confidence with Math & Reading Assistance

Mallory Lantzer has been a Math Interventionist at Westridge Elementary for nine years. She also is the co-chair of her Student Assistance Team, and leads PAWS (People At Westridge Succeed), an after-school Math Assistance Program funded by

the Elkhorn Public Schools Foundation.

According to Lantzer, one of the biggest challenges that teachers face in the classroom is feeling like they don't have enough time to effectively meet the needs of every individual student. "PAWS helps



us spend more time with the students that need our support the most,” she said.

Kindergarten through fifth grade students that attend PAWS spend an extra 30 minutes after school three days a week in small groups reviewing grade level content, practicing skills that are challenging for them, and gaining confidence in their math abilities. PAWS provided additional support to more than 60 students last year alone.

*“Some people might think that students wouldn’t want to stay after school to practice math, but for most kids, quite the opposite is true,” said Lantzer.*

“Our students love the opportunity to work in a small group with their teachers and peers. They enjoy the more individualized attention from their teachers, and they are willing to ask questions, and share their thinking out loud. Something that most of them aren’t confident enough to do in a whole-class setting.”

Lantzer said that the increase in confidence that she sees in her students after they attend PAWS is what makes the program so rewarding. “Our data shows that attending our after school math program has a huge impact on our students’ level of achievement

in the classroom on a daily basis, as well as on District and state assessments,” she said.

PAWS is just one of many math and reading assistance groups that are funded by the Foundation. In the 2021-2022 school year, over 400 elementary students in the Elkhorn Public Schools District needed additional instruction in math and reading. Our annual Bids For Kids event is the main fundraiser for our Math & Reading Assistance program. This year, the event raised \$74,000, thanks to the generosity of our sponsors,

donors, attendees, and auction participants.

If you are interested in making a contribution to our Math & Reading Assistance Program, please visit our website.

Our elementary schools are always looking for additional staff to lead Math & Reading Assistance groups before or after school as the need for them continues to increase. If you are an Elkhorn Public Schools staff member and are interested in leading a group, please contact your building principal.





# Elkhorn Family Honors Son by Establishing the Sam Osborn Memorial Scholarship

Next April, a graduating senior from an Elkhorn public high school will be awarded “The Sam Osborn Memorial Scholarship” for the first time. This opportunity was made possible by the Osborns, an Elkhorn family who lost their son to muscular dystrophy earlier this year. Sam would have graduated from Elkhorn South High School in 2023.

Sam Osborn was the youngest of four tremendously close siblings. At six months old, his journey to a diagnosis of congenital muscular dystrophy began.

“The progressive disease debilitates

the body, yet leaves the mind intact,” said the Osborn family. “As the disease affected him physically, Sam never let the condition limit his spirit or capacity for kindness. As his body grew more fragile, Sam became a greater source of strength and positivity that brightened the lives of those around him.”

Brilliant, yet never too serious, Sam used his remarkable intellect to bring warmth, humor, and happiness to all. He was expected to live to age eight. He passed away at age 17, having just finished a spectacular academic year as a junior in the 2021/2022 school year. Sam scored a 34 on his ACT exam, which surpassed his brother’s and



Sam Osborn with his mom Nikki Osborn and “Bonus Dad” Andrew Kimball.



Sam with his siblings from left to right: James, Grace, and William Osborn and his dad Mark Osborn.

sister's score (a fact he would be glad to share).

***“Sam illuminated a more fulfilling way to approach life,” said the Osborn Family.***

Facing tremendous challenges, he chose to push beyond them. He never resented his disease and instead focused on the opportunities brought to him by being differently abled. With the help of friends and family, Sam enjoyed a lifetime's worth of

experiences — he was blessed to have many friends who helped him be as independent as possible both inside and outside of school.

The Sam Osborn Memorial Scholarship will be awarded to a graduating Elkhorn Public Schools senior who has confronted their own disabilities to achieve academic success, and/or a student who has helped another gain independence from their disabilities.

This scholarship is just one of over 200 community-funded

scholarships that will be awarded to EPS graduating seniors this spring. The Foundation works with Elkhorn families and local businesses to award over \$500,000 in scholarships every year. Applications for all EPSF scholarships are open from December 1st to February 1st, annually.

If you would like more information on establishing a scholarship or making a donation to an existing scholarship, please visit our website.



# Elkhorn Alumni Raising Funds for Future Graduates

When Nicci (Lindsey) Clark was helping plan her 30-year Elkhorn High School Reunion, she and her classmates knew that they wanted to do something meaningful to memorialize the people in their class who had passed away.

After some brainstorming with the Foundation over the summer, Nicci helped establish 'The Elkhorn Public Schools Alumni Scholarship.' A new alumni-funded scholarship that will be awarded every year at all three Elkhorn high schools, beginning with three \$500 scholarships to the Class of 2023.

*"This scholarship is a great way to give people the opportunity to honor loved ones through in-memoriam donations and to let our fast-growing body of Alumni give back in a way that helps the next generation," said Clark.*

The Class of '92 held their reunion in June. They started the weekend in style by building a float for the annual Elkhorn Days parade and wearing matching class reunion t-shirts. The group was in high spirits as they waved Elkhorn Antler posters and shouted cheers from their high school days to the crowd lining Main Street. During the fun festivities of the weekend, the Class of 1992 also launched the new scholarship's first fundraising campaign for future scholarships. Between their fundraising efforts and some matching grants they have been able to raise over \$7,000 so far!

Nicci now serves as the scholarship's main representative, and plans to add more alumni from different classes and schools to the EPS Alumni Scholarship Selection Committee in the future. Her hope is that they can eventually award \$3,000-\$6,000 in scholarships every year.

The EPS Alumni Scholarship is just one of over 200 community-funded scholarships that will be awarded to EPS graduating seniors this spring. The Foundation works with Elkhorn families and local businesses to award over \$500,000 in scholarships every year. Applications for all EPSF scholarships are open from December 1st to February 1st, annually.

If you would like more information on establishing a scholarship, making a donation to an existing scholarship, or our new Alumni Program, please visit our website.





30 years later, the Elkhorn High School Class of 1992 still has their school spirit! As part of their reunion, they decorated and rode on a float in the Elkhorn Days Parade on June 11th through the crowded streets of downtown Elkhorn.





# GOLF FORE GRANTS

On June 6, over 200 participants, volunteers, and sponsors gathered for a day of golf, games, and fun at Champions Run Golf Course for our 23rd annual Golf Fore Grants Tournament. This year's event was our most successful Golf Fore Grants fundraiser yet, raising over \$55K for Elkhorn Public Schools' classrooms!

This year's event featured a four-person 18-hole afternoon scramble which began with a noon shotgun start. Members of Elkhorn South High School Cheer, Elkhorn North Band, Elkhorn Kids Campus Employees, and Foundation Friends teamed up to assist with golf games all along the course which included opportunities to win a variety of prizes including a lease on a 2022 Alfa Romeo Stelvio. For the first

time in EPSF Golf Fore Grants history, a tournament golfer shot a hole-in-one and won the lease on the 2022 Alfa Romeo Stelvio! This is also the only "win a car" hole-in-one that has been recorded at Champions Run!

The tournament team champions were DA Davidson's Paul Grieger, Al Herink, Cody Wickham, and Jeff Roh with a winning score of 57. Jukes Ale Works' foursome were the winners of this year's putting

green contest and the best Golf Poker hand went to Wyatt Behlen.

A full list of the event's winners and pictures can be found on our website.



Tournament Winners, Paul Grieger, Al Herink, Jeff Roh, and Cody Wickham



Every year, the Foundation works with the Elkhorn Public Schools District to launch our TEAM Campaign, an annual fundraiser where we ask Elkhorn Public Schools staff to support the Foundation by making a monthly pledge or one-time donation.

By donating to our TEAM Campaign, they help us provide additional funding for Elkhorn Public Schools Foundation programs such as Classroom Grants, Math & Reading Assistance, Scholarships for graduating seniors, Teacher Tuition Reimbursement, our Kids in Need Fund, and more.

This year, the annual campaign raised over \$60K, making it the most successful TEAM Campaign to date.

Thanks to the generous support of the District's staff, the Foundation surpassed our fundraising goal for this year's campaign. We will be providing a catered lunch to all Elkhorn Public Schools staff in 2023 to show our appreciation. We are extremely grateful for the continued support of the Elkhorn Public Schools staff and would like to thank all who "got on the bus" and made a contribution this year.



Elkhorn North High School Principal Dan Radicia and Hollie Maloney sporting their new TEAM Campaign spirit gear.

## Bids For Kids

Earlier this year, the Elkhorn Public Schools Foundation hosted its most successful Bids For Kids fundraiser to date thanks to the generosity of the event's auction donors, bidders, and sponsors.

From September 28th to October 6th, more than 400

members of the Elkhorn community came together and raised \$74K to help fund the Math & Reading Assistance Programs that take place in the Elkhorn District's elementary schools.

This year's Bids For Kids event featured 313 auction items, many of which were donated by local businesses and friends of the Elkhorn Public Schools Foundation. Some of the most coveted items included a Husker

Volleyball package, Blake Shelton Pinnacle Bank Suite tickets, an in-home wine tasting from WineShop, and a round of golf at the Lost Rail, Nebraska's new exclusive golf course. Nearly 2,000 bids were made over the nine-day

auction.

"Thank you to everyone who bid on this year's items!" Said Stacey L. Falk, Executive Director of the Elkhorn Public Schools Foundation. "It's because of you that we're able to fund

these important programs that help our District's young students receive the extra help they need to be successful."

Event pictures can be found on our website.



Bids For Kids event organizers and volunteers.



On November 3rd, the Elkhorn Public Schools Foundation held its annual Hall of Fame Banquet & Awards Ceremony at the EPSF Alumni Center.

Every fall, the Elkhorn Public Schools Foundation honors Elkhorn teachers, staff, alumni, volunteers, and community

businesses that have significantly impacted the Elkhorn Public Schools community and its students at its Hall of Fame Reception. Nearly 200 members of the Elkhorn community attended the event to honor nine Hall of Fame Recipients this year.

"We have many educators within the Elkhorn Public Schools District who go 'above and beyond' every day," said Stacey L. Falk, Executive Director

of the Elkhorn Public Schools Foundation. "It is the dedication of our teachers, volunteers, and community that sets

us apart from other school districts. Your support truly exemplifies why Elkhorn Public Schools and our community are

among the best in the state!"

Event pictures can be found on our website.



Hall of Fame Recipients Ashley Staton (Golden Apple of the Year), Angie Knutson (Volunteer of the Year), Jenny Haase (Volunteer of the Year), James Manske (Community Booster of the Year), Julie Sorensen (Former Educator of the Year), Melissa Simons (Carl L. White Educator of the Year), Mary Jo Giesselmann (Support Staff Member of the Year), Jon Driscoll (Volunteer of the Year), and Ed Pullen (Teammates Mentor of the Year).



Elkhorn Kids Campus is looking for bright, energetic, and creative individuals to join the EKC Team! Application can be found on our website.



Join the EKC Team! Apply online at [www.elkhornfoundation.org/ekc/ekc-application](http://www.elkhornfoundation.org/ekc/ekc-application)



## EKC 2023 Summer & 2023-2024 School Year Registration

Current Family Registration will be held at the Elkhorn Public Schools Foundation office from **February 6<sup>th</sup> - February 10<sup>th</sup>**.

**February 6<sup>th</sup> - 8am to 7pm**  
**February 7<sup>th</sup> - 8am to 7pm**  
**February 8<sup>th</sup> - 8am to 4pm**  
**February 9<sup>th</sup> - 8am to 4pm**  
**February 10<sup>th</sup> - 8am to 4pm**

New Families will start the registration process on February 6th at 9 am.

Please email **ekc@elkhornfoundation.org** with the school your child will be attending to receive the link on February 6th.

