



2023-24

HOLDREGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

An Equal Opportunity Agency

ANNUAL REPORT TO PATRONS

A note from Todd Hilyard, Superintendent



In reading through the Holdrege Public Schools Annual Report, we hope that you see that we are working every day to empower all students for success, all while emphasizing fiscal responsibility to our patrons.

We know that we have great community support and that there is a direct relationship between this support and the quality of our schools. Holdrege Public Schools has a long-standing tradition of dedicated staff members. These staff members, coupled with parents who truly care about their child's education, community members who are solution based, and a consistently progressive school board, have allowed us to provide for an amazing learning environment for our students. Together, all of the entities are committed to the Holdrege Public Schools' mission of preparing students to be lifelong learners and productive, responsible citizens by providing a quality education in cooperation with family and community.

It is my privilege to serve you as the HPS Superintendent. Thank you for your help in making the Dusters one of the most well respected districts in the State of Nebraska. Go Dusters!

Statement of Philosophy

The Holdrege Public Schools have been established by this community for the purpose of preparing students to assume their place as responsible, productive citizens in our community, state, nation, and world. To accomplish this we must endeavor to provide experiences and opportunities for each individual to develop to their fullest potential. We must impart not only knowledge, but the thinking skills to put our knowledge to use. We are charged with assisting the student to acquire the skills, attitudes, appreciations, and insights which will help him or her to live effectively and productively in a challenging and changing world.

Mission

The mission of the Holdrege Public Schools is to prepare all students to be lifelong learners and productive, responsible citizens by providing a quality education in cooperation with family and community.

Governing Values

We believe ...

- that everyone deserves to be treated with

dignity and respect.

- that we must demonstrate, encourage, and expect responsible behavior.
- that all students are individuals with unique talents and abilities.
- that all students should be given the opportunity for an appropriate education to help them reach their potential.
- that we are committed to prepare our students for the future.
- that schools should provide an inviting and stimulating environment for all.
- that learning is a lifelong process with responsibility shared by the learner, school, home, and community.

Educational Programs & Services

Holdrege Elementary School was completed for occupancy at the beginning of the 2015-16 school year. The building also houses the HPS Early Childhood Education Center.

Holdrege Elementary School provides a developmentally appropriate educational environment for all K-4 students. Instruction is offered in all curricular areas with the use of current instructional practices with technology used to enhance learning opportunities. Title I reading and math, Response to Intervention, special services, and other programs are available to students.

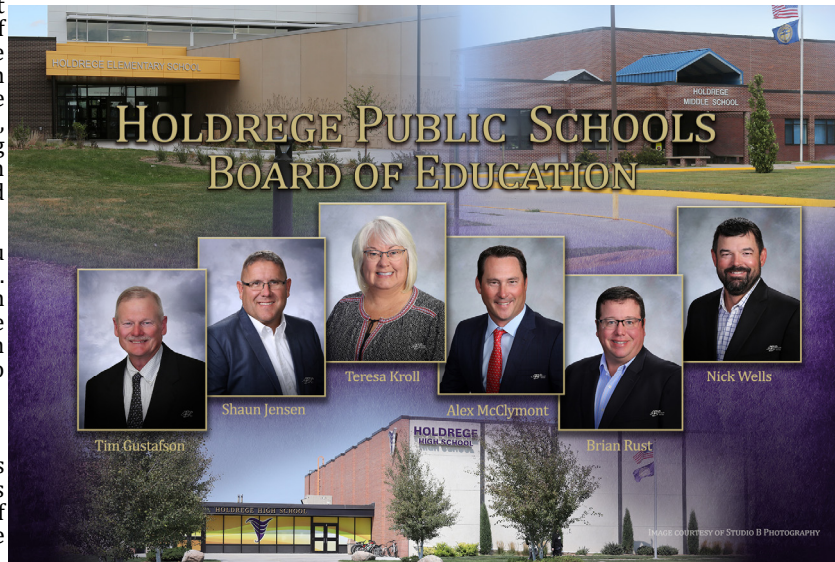
The HPS Early Childhood Education Center program provides educational services which strive to assist preschool children in achieving language, cognitive, socio-emotional, and physical gains.

Holdrege Middle School is dedicated to the development of the 5-8 grade students intellectually, socially, and emotionally by providing solid core and exploratory academic programs that allow students to discover interests and personal academic goals. HMS seeks to work in partnership with parents and students to help make the transition smooth from elementary to high school by providing the best opportunities available for each student to be successful.

Holdrege High School is a comprehensive secondary school serving 9-12 grade students by promoting a solid work ethic, citizenship, and academic success for all students. Students are encouraged to develop a sense of responsibility that enables them to be both self-disciplined and self-reliant. With the use of the 1:1 technology enhanced learning environment, the High School is dedicated to provide 21st century learning opportunities and skills by all teachers in all subject areas.

HPS identifies high ability learners and provides an integrated program for all students using differentiated instruction and emphasizing problem solving techniques, high level thinking skills, and opportunities for creativity. Advanced placement courses, as well as participation in quiz bowls, summer honors program, and other challenging experiences are made available to students. HPS participates in the High Ability Learner Education Consortium through Educational Service Unit #11.

Title I services are provided for all students in grades K-4 who show need for extra assistance in reading and mathematics skills.



Board of Education

The HPS Board of Education meets in regular session monthly, with special meetings as needed. All meetings are open to the public and follow the Open Meetings Act as established by statute. Meeting agendas are available online and Board policies are posted on the school website.

District Location & Facilities

HPS District #69-0044 covers 183.2 square miles in Phelps County and 31.2 square miles in Harlan County. District attendance centers include Holdrege High School, Holdrege Middle School, Holdrege Elementary School, and the HPS Early Childhood Education Center.

The Tassel Center for the Performing Arts was gifted to HPS in 1999 by the Phelps County Community Foundation, Inc. The Tassel provides a setting for students to showcase their talents in music, speech, and theatre.

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STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

For additional information, see the 2023-24 Nebraska Department of Education's Nebraska Education Profile at <https://nep.education.ne.gov/#/profiles/district/snapshot?agencyId=69-0044-000&dataYears=20232024>

MAPS

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments are given to grades 5-11 twice a year at both the Middle School and High School levels. They are given to grades K-4 students three times a year. The assessments are used to inform teaching and learning practices of where students currently stand in their learning and where they need to go for continued success and growth. The students are given an RIT score or benchmark indicator, that reflects where students are performing academically based on state and national standards.

When analyzing the scores, we continue to see growth from grade to grade. Increased growth indicates that students were able to grasp and retain learned concepts. District NWEA scores are at or above the RIT End-Year Norms (2020) scores in eight of the twelve levels for math and six of the twelve levels for reading.

NSCAS

The Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System (NSCAS) assessments are given each spring. Students are assessed in math and English language arts for grades 3-8, as well as science for grades 5 and 8. The NSCAS assessments continue to be updated and changed to reflect the changes made to content standards and technology advancements.

Based on the NSCAS results from spring 2024, our District outperformed the state averages by 8% in math and 11% in science, while in reading we were just shy of 1% compared to the state average.

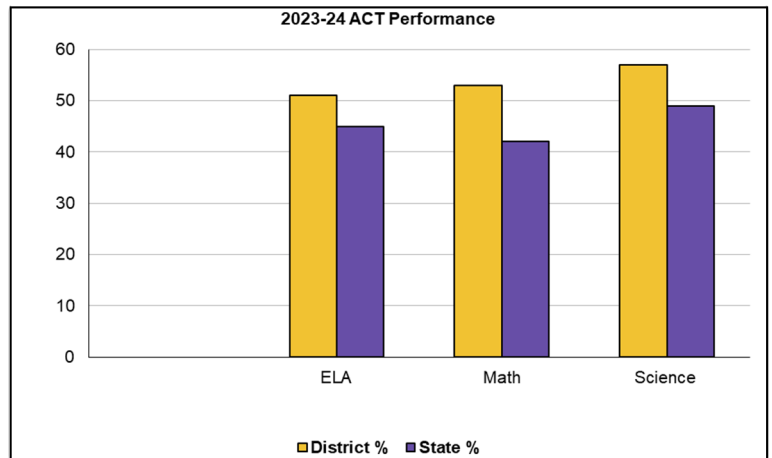
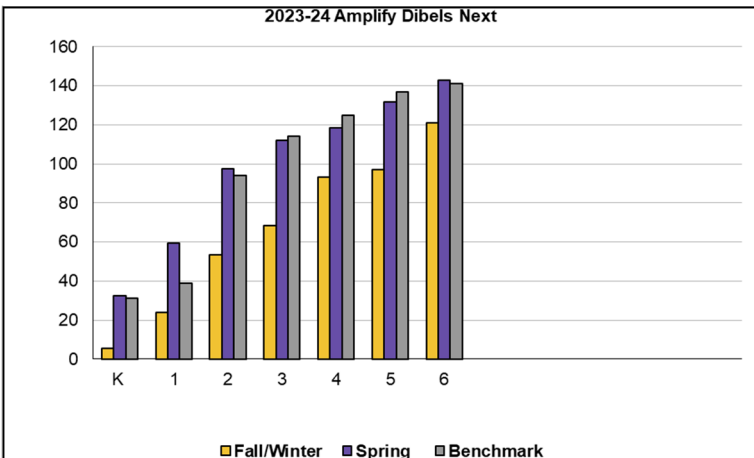
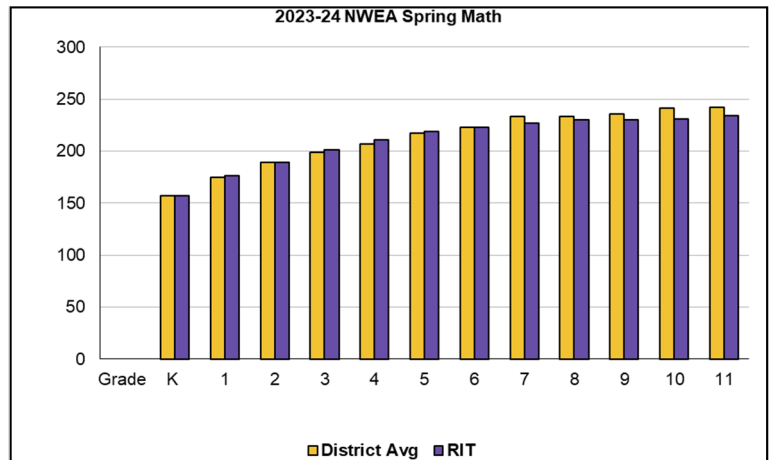
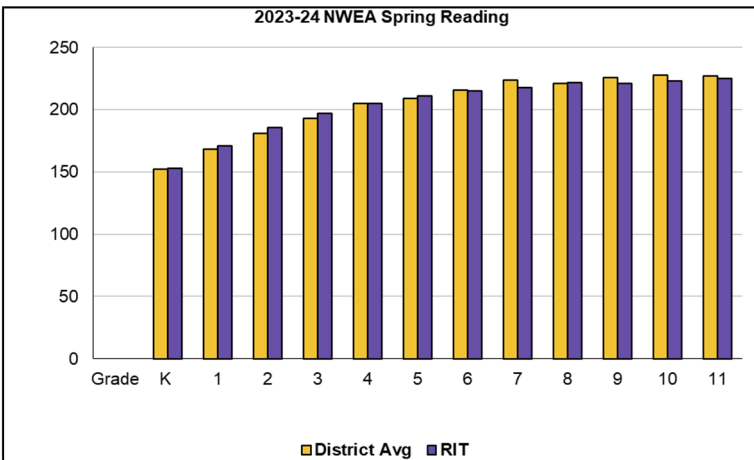
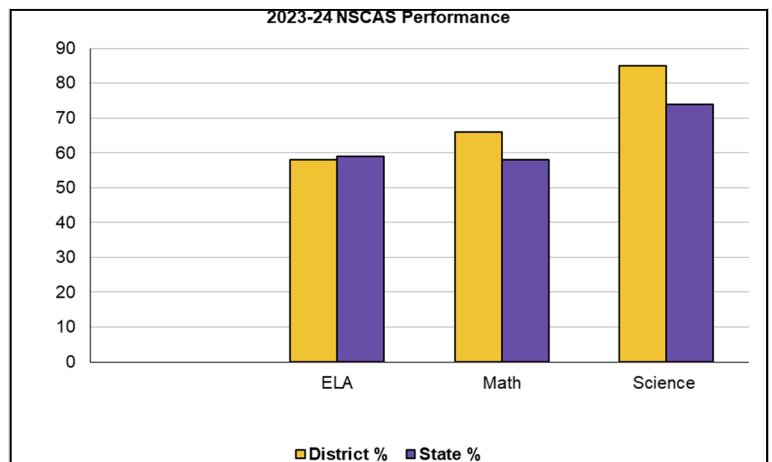
Amplify DIBELS Next

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) testing is used to assess student phonemic awareness, phonics skills, and oral reading fluency to enhance student reading abilities. The assessment is given to all K-6 grade students, three times a year (fall, winter, and spring). This year, the assessment transitioned to Amplify DIBELS Next, which has a higher level of rigor. Despite the increased challenge, the students demonstrated remarkable growth in meeting the new expectations and adapting to the platform.

K-6 grade students increased their DIBELS performance by an average of 33 points in the 2023-24 school year. The data shows a comparative trend of reaching and/or exceeding set benchmarks.

ACT

The ACT, a college readiness assessment, is now required for students in place of a state-developed assessment. The purpose of the ACT is to determine students' level of performance in preparation for college. The content areas assessed include English, math, reading, science, and writing. The state ACT test was taken by HHS juniors in March 2024. Our juniors outperformed the state average for all three academic areas. They scored 6% higher for reading, 11% for higher for math, and 8% higher for science. Students can use their composite scores from this required assessment for college admittance and entrance requirements.

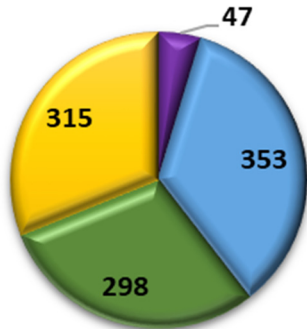


HPS SNAPSHOT

2023-24

Student Enrollment 2023-24

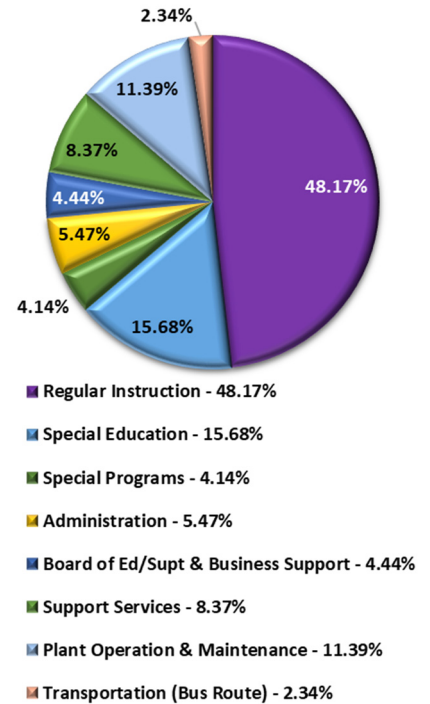
Total Enrollment - 1,013



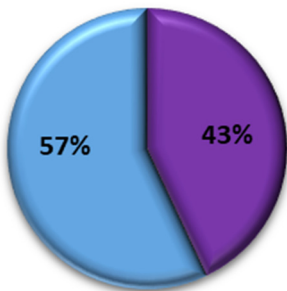
- PK/Early Childhood - 47
- Grades K-4 - 353
- Grades 5-8 - 298
- Grades 9-12 - 315

2023-24 ENROLLMENT (October 1 NDE Snapshot)	
PK/Early Childhood	47
Kindergarten	65
Grade 1	79
Grade 2	71
Grade 3	67
Grade 4	71
Grade 5	74
Grade 6	75
Grade 7	71
Grade 8	78
Grade 9	91
Grade 10	78
Grade 11	76
Grade 12	70
TOTAL	1,013

General Fund Expenditures



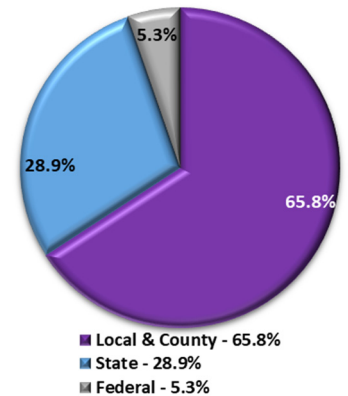
Free & Reduced Meals Percentage



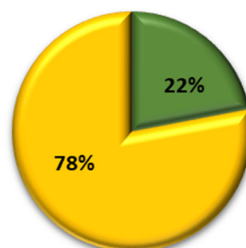
- Free & Reduced - 43%
- Non Free & Reduced - 57%

2023-24 Staffing	
Certified Staff—Teachers, Special Services, and Administrators	102.00 FTE
Professional Staff—School Psychologist, Mental Health Practitioner, and Nurse	4.00 FTE
Paraeducators & Aides	30.63 FTE
Administrative Support, Clerical, Custodial, Route Bus Drivers, Other	23.01 FTE
100% of HPS Teachers are NCLB/ESSA Qualified	
HPS Certificated & Professional Staff Average 15.68 years of Experience	

Funding Sources



Special Education Percentage



- SPED - 22%
- Non-SPED - 78%

2023-24 Transportation & Activities

Student Activities logged 77,383 miles

83% of Holdrege High School Students participated in at least one Student Activity

326 PK-12th Grade Students were transported 45,397 miles on Bus Routes & Courtesy Shuttle

2023-24 Valuation, Levy, and Per Pupil Cost

District Valuation	\$1,184,624,138
General Fund Levy	\$0.860506
Bond Fund Levy (New Elem.)	0.077110
Building Fund Levy	0.038701
QCPU Fund Levy	0.000000
TOTAL LEVY	\$0.976317
District Per Pupil Cost (ADM)	\$18,333



Parent involvement to emphasize reading is a successful part of the program.

Services are provided for students identified as "limited English proficient".

Summer school is available for students in grades K-4, while summer session credit recovery is available for middle school and high school students.

HPS educates students with disabilities alongside students who do not have disabilities in the regular education environment, unless the nature or severity is such that education in regular classes using supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Special services are provided to those students who have been referred by the Student Assistance Team and verified by the



Multidisciplinary Team. Teachers and specialists provide the following services to children with disabilities: resource assistance; speech/language, occupational, and physical therapy; behavioral services; audiology and vision services; and transition program services.

Accreditation

The District is accredited by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) and was awarded continuing accreditation through spring 2029. Our most recent accreditation visit took place over two days in spring 2024 and was conducted by an external review team comprised of six professionals from across Nebraska. The team included individuals with diverse roles, such as a director of curriculum, a superintendent, an ESU representative, an NDE representative, and two classroom teachers. This well-rounded group of experienced professionals thoroughly reviewed the district's policies, procedures, and practices.



During the initial presentation, the external team learned how the school improvement goal was decided and examined the data used to support that decision. The school improvement committee members and leadership team shared district demographic data, including attendance rates, graduation rates, mobility rates for teachers and students, and special education statistics. The team also explored the district's reading initiatives, which have been a primary focus over the past five years, and inquired about the interventions, supports, and professional development offered to achieve these goals.

The primary academic goal of Holdrege Public Schools over the last several years has been improvement in the area of reading. The



team commended the district for establishing policies and procedures in order to monitor and support instructional practices in reading. Through the Response to Intervention process, new K-12 English Language Arts curriculum, professional development, and a commitment to increased time devoted to reading, this goal has become a reality.

The review process included the analysis of a wide range of academic data, such as data placemats and various documents with student achievement metrics. The external team engaged in interviews with staff, students, parents, and board members, and conducted observations throughout the district. These activities allowed the team to gain a comprehensive understanding of the district's strengths and areas for growth.



District Commendations:

- The district has cultivated a clear family atmosphere, characterized by a cohesive staff willing to go above and beyond to support students.
- Resources have been maximized effectively, offering students a variety of opportunities for both intervention and acceleration, as well as a multitude of course offerings.
- Stakeholders, including students, staff, and parents, are well-informed about the district's school improvement plan goal focused on reading and can articulate how it is implemented across all levels.
- The staff's dedication to improving literacy skills at all levels is evident, with time and collaboration prioritized to achieve this goal.

District Recommendations:

- Strengthen the use of data-driven practices by utilizing assessment data and progress



monitoring to inform instruction, allocate resources effectively, and ensure targeted, impactful interventions. Additionally, refine the MTSS process across all buildings to ensure staff understanding, consistent implementation, and improved monitoring of student outcomes.

- Foster collaboration among teachers, specialists, and administrators through regular team meetings, shared planning time, and coordinated intervention efforts. Provide uniform procedures for special education referrals and revisit student behavior management flowcharts to ensure clarity, consistency, and ongoing professional development.



- Monitor and continuously improve the literacy program and interventions by collecting teacher feedback, analyzing student data, and making necessary adjustments. Consider implementing Stay Surveys and Exit Surveys to monitor staff morale and retention efforts.

The external review team's experience with the HPS district was enriching and revealed a strong sense of pride. Through a comprehensive assessment and analysis of achievement data, demographic insights, stakeholder interviews, and program evaluations, the team confirmed that the HPS community is forward-thinking, adaptable, and growth-oriented. The district's commitment to providing an outstanding educational foundation for every student is commendable.

The team congratulated the district on the completion of another commendable five-year cycle of continuous improvement. They noted that the district's dedication to excellence will undoubtedly continue to positively shape the lives of students for years to come and encouraged HPS stakeholders to reflect on their progress and prepare for the future with continued focus on leveraging current strengths to achieve even greater success.

