

# LAWRENCE - NELSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



THE  
START  
OF SOMETHING  
NEW

2024  
2025

Lawrence - Nelson Public Schools

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RAIDERS



# THE START OF SOMETHING NEW

## Lawrence-Nelson Public Schools

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Nelson, NE 68961

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**Left:** Tripp Ostdiek (7) takes off down the court in a fast break in hopes of beating his defenders and making a layup.



**Right:** Mrs. Tammy Alber helps Wesley Herz (2) use his touch to talk device to sing at the elementary's Veteran's Day Program.



**Left:** Senior Kara Menke goes up for the jump against Mrs. Lacey Hild during the student vs. staff basketball game.

**Right:** Mr. Decker Brown starts the Veteran's Day Program with a welcome speech.



**Left:** Senior Valentina Koehler sings the National Anthem, signifying the start of the graduation ceremony.

**Principal:** Mr. Dan Kennedy

**Superintendent:** Mr. Stephen Grizzle

Cover Design by Mrs. Kylee Haba, Journalism Sponsor

## The Start of Something New: An Introduction

As we turn the pages of this yearbook, we reflect on a theme that captures the spirit of our school community: "The Start of Something New." This year, Lawrence-Nelson officially became its own district, separating from South Central Unified School District #5 and becoming an independent entity. This change represents more than just a structural shift—it symbolizes growth, courage, and the excitement of forging our own path. It reminds us that even when something feels unfamiliar or uncomfortable, great things can begin when we take a chance and move forward together.

## Reflecting on the Beginning

This school year brought many new faces, schedules, and hallways to navigate. For some students, it marked the beginning of high school; for others, their first steps into middle school. Change can be daunting, but our administrators—led by Principal Dan Kennedy and Superintendent Stephen Grizzle—worked hard to create an environment full of opportunity, support, and the tools each student needs to succeed.

## Embracing Change

Every student started something new this year, taking steps toward their goals and dreams. From kindergartners to seniors, each experience has helped shape who they are becoming. Whether joining a new club, trying a new sport, enrolling in a challenging class, or taking on leadership roles, students embraced change in ways that fostered both personal and academic growth. These moments of courage, big and small, helped create a journey filled with purpose and progress.

## Capturing the Journey

Throughout the year, students reached important milestones—on the field, on the stage, in the classroom, and beyond. These achievements, along with unforgettable memories, marked the chapters of our school story. From the excitement of the first day to the final buzzer of the last game, these pages are filled with snapshots of growth, friendship, and success. Our teachers have guided us, helping us discover passions and pursue new ideas, always encouraging us to keep moving forward.

## Looking Forward

While many of our students are just beginning their academic journeys, others are preparing to take the next step into life beyond high school. "The Start of Something New" isn't just a theme—it's a mindset that carries with us into the future. Underclassmen look ahead with anticipation, knowing that someday soon, they too will walk across the stage, ready to begin their next chapter.

Our supportive staff, caring community, and dedicated parents all contribute to a school environment where students can thrive. Their involvement and generosity enrich our education and help make our achievements possible. Their impact is deeply appreciated and invaluable.

## Closing Sentiment

Every story in this yearbook began with a first step—and this year, we took ours. But this is only the beginning. As we reflect on all we've accomplished, we do so with pride, knowing that the Lawrence-Nelson Raiders are just getting started. The future holds endless possibilities, and together, we have the strength and spirit to achieve anything.



# PORTRAITS

With every small moment captured in these portraits, we celebrate not just a memory, but the beginning of something new—a year filled with fresh starts, new friendships, and endless possibilities. Lawrence-Nelson Schools are more than just two buildings filled with people; we are a tight-knit community committed to fostering an environment rooted in determination, respect, and individual passion.

It truly takes a village, and everyone—from students to staff—plays a role in preserving the positive culture that L-N is known for. Students are encouraged to take ownership of their learning, and just as importantly, to support one another. L-N students challenge each other to grow academically, athletically, and personally. Support staff contribute in countless ways—from maintaining clean, safe spaces to preparing nutritious meals and ensuring the school operates smoothly.

Classroom teachers promote positive attitudes and a sense of responsibility in learning. They go beyond teaching curriculum, taking time to build meaningful relationships with students and offering guidance during challenges. The administration manages both the daily operations and behind-the-scenes responsibilities that keep the schools running effectively.

“The Start of Something New” is not only the theme of this year’s yearbook—it’s the theme of our entire school year. This theme is especially fitting, as this is the first year Lawrence-Nelson is officially operating independently, following the split from South Central Unified School District #5. Many in our community are excited about this new chapter, as it allows us to create a unique identity and build a culture that is distinctly that of a Raider.

“I am looking forward to continuing to build upon the L-N brand. I want our students to be proud of this place and understand that there are so many teachers and staff who care about them deeply. We are a special place, and I look forward to working with students and promoting our culture and school,” shared Mr. Decker Brown.

Our students will continue to benefit from programs like the Career Quest mentorship initiative and will have a wide range of extracurricular activities and clubs to choose from. The school also provides numerous opportunities for students to grow socially, emotionally, and in communication skills—skills that will serve them for life.

The portraits taken this year do more than capture faces; they reflect the energy, joy, and sense of belonging within our schools. Our teachers strike a balance between structure and self-expression. They’re always ready for a fun conversation and willing to help any student in need. This is just the beginning of describing what makes the culture and environment of L-N Schools so special.

“Two years ago, I retired from teaching at L-N, only to return in a different position. The positive culture of our school has not changed in those few years,” said Mrs. Tammy Alber. There are countless positive aspects of L-N Schools. From our favorable staff-to-student ratio and strong community and parental support to the broad and varied curriculum, the culture here is something we value deeply.

Everyone at L-N—from support staff to administrators—works collaboratively to help students reach their full potential. Every year, third-grade teacher Mr. Jerad Niederklein gives his students nicknames that match their personalities, creating a fun and personal classroom environment. Students make the most of their time at school, turning each day into a meaningful and memorable experience.

At both the elementary and high school levels, students truly enjoy their school day. Much of that joy comes from the strong relationships between teachers and students, and the commitment to maintaining a fun, healthy, and respectful learning environment. Students thrive through engaging lessons, positive interactions, and a shared dedication to responsibility and respect.

Our yearbook theme isn’t just a reflection of what’s happened so far—it’s about everything new that has begun this year. Students and staff across both buildings have already made countless meaningful memories. Whether through big events like homecoming and prom or everyday moments in the classroom, what makes our school truly special is the way our students support one another and turn challenges into positive outcomes.

No matter what happens, L-N students always step up to help and make each day a good one. School is meant to be one of the most joyful and memorable parts of a student’s life—a place to try new things, grow, and embrace the many opportunities available to them.



**Left:** Cooper Heikkinen (9), Carson Vaughn (12), Kolten Menke (9) and Aidan Zikmund (12) help measure distances at the softball throw during the elementary field day.

**Right:** Mr. Brian Blevins presents this year’s Raider Fan of the Year Award to longtime Raider supporter, Roger Williams. This year Roger had to unfortunately miss some events due to a tragic fall, which landed him in the hospital for a long recovery. Roger made strides in his healing and was back in the stands as if nothing had ever happened. We thank Roger for his dedication to and support of all the Raider activities.

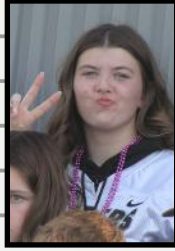




## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:

"Being a freshman has opened up opportunities that weren't there in junior high, such as being a part of higher-level sports teams, new clubs, and allowing myself to get out of my comfort zone."

-Brynnly Harrison, Freshman-



**Right:** Paige Huston (10), Natalia Wehrman (10), and Kimber Buescher (9) pose for a silly picture while on the volleyball float in the homecoming parade.

**Below:** Victoria Koehler (9) and Madelyn Laughlin (9) are proudly wearing their FFA jackets after receiving them at the Greenhand Ceremony.



**Below:** Natalie Jacobitz (11) and Raylene Miller (11) are doing some last minute painting for their homecoming hallway decorations.



**Right:** Cody Brockman (12) and William Schaefer (12) stand to give a speech about what Veteran's Day means to them and what they constructed for a project.

**Left:** Ryker Drohman (4) and Harper Haba (4) sing front and center together at the elementary Christmas concert, ready to pass on their candlelight to the rest of the elementary students.

**Right:** NAHS member Kara Peters (9) paints Layla Fox's (2) face with a purple ribbon for National Epilepsy Week in honor of her classmate Kip Musgrave.

**Below:** Mrs. Kylee Haba poses with her future art teacher students Olivia Stokes (1) and Kynslee Janda (1) during "Dress Like What you Want to be When you Grow Up" Day.



**Above:** Addison McCloskey (12) works on her flower painting skills while creating at the Hastings College Mural Competition with her team.



**Right:** Kimber Barga (2) and Oaklyn Haba (2) hold their Eileen's cookies that they won for drawing the best spooky picture. Kimber won 3rd place and Oaklyn won 2nd place in their age category.





# 2033

## Fourth Grade

Lexi Arbogast  
Brinnley Buescher  
Cash Cassell  
Ryker Drohman  
Jacobi Durre  
Laney Elledge



Albert Ellington  
Harley Furrey  
Harper Haba  
Myla Hubl  
Luke Kathman  
Kree Kucera



Reule Lowery  
Sawyer Menke  
Easton Peterson  
Raegan Peterson  
Ellie Schropfer  
Ansley Wehrman



**Left:** Ellie Schropfer plays with the yoga balls during the YMCA Health Day field trip.

**Below:** The fourth graders clean up nicely for a class picture during school picture day.



**Below:** Lexi Arbogast races her friend on the inflatable obstacle course during the end-of-the-year carnival.



**Above:** Brinnley Buescher receives her certificate packet from Mrs. Hoelting at the awards ceremony.



**Below:** Reule Lowery plays ladder ball with a friend during the elementary fun day before the track meet.



**Above:** Ryker Drohman, Luke Kathman, and Raegan Peterson were recognized at the awards ceremony for being the top three readers for AR this year in the fourth grade.

### STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:

"Some new things we did this year included fun projects to go with what we were learning, like our zoo projects for math and our famous Nebraskan biographies in writing and history."

-Harper Haba, Fourth Grade-





# 2032

## Fifth Grade



**Breckyn Bohlen  
Gabriel Cannaday  
Brooklyn DeLong  
Kallen Faimon  
Kinsley Grobeck  
Jarett Hoelting**



**Sophia Koehler  
Emersyn Mazour  
Hannah Mazour  
Grady Mertens  
Kasen Musgrave  
Aaron Nissen**



**Carson Wehrman**

**Below:** The fifth graders pose for a class picture together at the beginning of the year.



**Left:** Hannah Mazour and Sophia Koehler play proudly to show off all that they have learned in band this year during the Spring concert.



**Below:** Kallen Faimon won 2nd place in his age category for the Eileen's Halloween Cookie Contest.

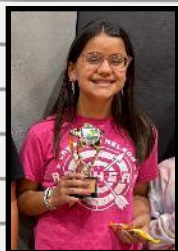


**Right:** Kasen Musgrave leaps over the hurdle while someone holds it steady during the windy elementary track meet.



**Left:** Breckyn Bohlen is proud of her balloon dog sculpture that she is working on in art class.

### STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:



"Something new that I accomplished this year was achieving my goal of reading one million words in AR."

-Sophia Koehler, Fifth Grade-





# CLUBS & EVENTS

As the year came to a close, we reflected on what an incredible journey it has been—full of exciting clubs, memorable events, and new beginnings. Fittingly, our yearbook theme, "The Start of Something New," perfectly captures the spirit of this school year. Many of our clubs embraced fresh ideas, welcomed new members, and explored different ways to grow.

Some of our long-standing events have become more popular than ever, with more students attending, helping, and simply enjoying the experience. This year's theme wasn't just a title—it represented a shift in our school's mindset. Students and staff alike proved that we can start fresh, leave a positive mark, and continue building a legacy that shows Lawrence-Nelson Public Schools is a fantastic place to learn and grow.

This was also the first year Lawrence-Nelson officially operated independently, separate from South Central Unified School District #5. This independence gave our school the opportunity to grow stronger on its own and support each student's personal development more effectively.

Each club at L-N offers students a unique perspective and experience. Together, they reflect the diversity and creativity of our school community and help strengthen our sense of family. Students are discovering new interests, taking initiative, and finding their voices—all while contributing to a positive and inclusive school culture.

One of the most anticipated events of the year came right after a home football game. Students gathered at the Lawrence Elementary School gym for the Homecoming Dance—a night full of fun, laughter, and making new connections with classmates they might not interact with every day.

That was just the beginning. Our National Honor Society (NHS) hosted a brand-new event called Pizza, Puzzles, and Pop for both middle and high school students. It was a huge hit, and many attendees said they hope it becomes a yearly tradition.

Clubs at Lawrence-Nelson aren't just about having fun—they also teach valuable life skills. Whether it's organizing events, collaborating with peers, or giving back to the community, students are learning lessons they'll use well beyond school. These experiences help students see how they can make a positive difference not only within the club but also in shaping our school's culture.

We held a wide variety of events this year—some big, like prom, and others small but meaningful, like NHS's roadside clean-up. One of our favorite traditions is the annual Community Clean-Up Day, where middle and high school students volunteer to clean up the streets of both Lawrence and Nelson. They also send out flyers to offer yard work and other help to local residents. This year, students even pitched in to help clean both town's swimming pools, and paint beautiful artwork on a window in downtown Nelson!

As the final chapter of this school year closes and we head into summer break, it's clear that many great things have started and many more are on the horizon. We saw the rise of new clubs, renewed enthusiasm for old ones, and a deep sense of gratitude for the adults—teachers, sponsors, and staff—who support these efforts every step of the way.

Our students worked hard all year to make Lawrence-Nelson more than just a school. They've shown that we're a family—helping each other grow, staying positive, and striving to become better people. This spirit was evident in every event, every club meeting, and every moment of connection.

"The Start of Something New" is more than a theme. It's a reflection of all the new opportunities, new faces, and new organizations that have helped make this year so special. And with the foundation we've built, it's just the beginning.

**Below:** Allison Harrison (7), Mason Menke (6), Anne Mazour (6), Gage Haba (7), Leslie Corman (10), Ian Zikmund (8), and other students help community members clean up their yards during Community Clean-Up Day.



**Right:** Graduating seniors Sawyer Cox and Cody Brockman take one last walk across the gym floor during the processional at graduation. Congrats guys!





## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:

"This year I tried out a new activity. I joined Dinner Theater, and it helped me learn to break out of my comfort zone and play new characters."

- Natalia Wehrman, Sophomore-



**Right:** Brooklyn Mazour (8), Samantha Nissen (6), Preslea Adams (9), and Kimber Beuscher (9) help clean windows for the community members during Community Clean-Up Day.

**Below:** NAHS member Emily Jacobitz (12) helps her little cousin Bennett Jacobitz (K) cut out pieces for his Dr. Seuss Day art project.



**Below:** Kindergarteners and first graders do the actions to their favorite song in their Christmas program, "Jingle, Jingle, Jingle" from Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer.

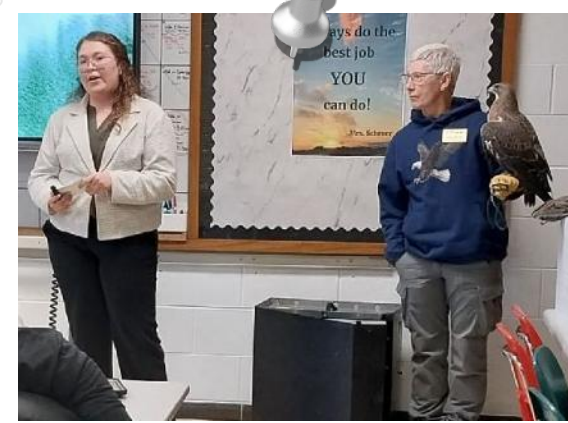


**Right:** Second grader Layla Fox kicks the football as hard as she can in hopes of sending it farther than her classmates during the elementary's field day.

**Left:** Seniors Hayden Mazour and Carson Vaughn take a break from playing during the student vs. staff basketball game. The seniors won this year, and they were happy to take back the 'W' after last year's loss.

**Below:** Natalie Jacobitz (11) enjoyed every second of her mentorship with the Edgerton Explorit Center in Aurora. She got to work with their birds of prey program and even bring a bald eagle to the school for Veteran's Day.

**Right:** Anne Mazour (6) earned 3rd place in her age category for her Halloween cookie design sponsored by Eileen's Collasal Cookies. She won a large cookie with her design on it. Yum!



**Right:** Senior Madalyn Kennedy places her flag on the wreath after speaking to the audience about her Veteran's Day project and what Veteran's Day means to her.



**Above :** Preslea Adams (9) listens intently to Maya Fanning (9) as she sings her solo at the high school choir's Spring concert.





# HOMECOMING



**Above:** This year's crowned Homecoming King and Queen were seniors Aidan Zikmund and Kara Menke.

**Below:** Homecoming Class Representatives included juniors Raylene Miller and Nathan Stokes, freshmen Maya Fanning and Kolten Menke, and sophomores Kynnedi Beale and Brandt McLaughlin.



**Above:** The crown bearers for this year's homecoming coronation were kindergarteners Chance Harrison and Paisley Wulf.

The start of the year brings new planning challenges for events, and the first major one is always Homecoming. Lawrence-Nelson is known for having an exciting Homecoming week—from students going all out in their participation (which saw a big boost this year) to strong support for our sports teams.

Homecoming week kicked off on Monday, September 30, with the theme "Let's Have a Sleepover!" Everyone came dressed in their coziest pajamas, complete with slippers, blankets, and stuffed animals. After lunch, the student council hosted a lively game of musical chairs, with two participants from each class competing for a seat as the music played.

On Tuesday, October 1, it was Adam Sandler Day. Students nailed the look with baggy shorts and oversized t-shirts to match his iconic laid-back style. That day's lunchtime activity was a class scavenger hunt, where four students from each class raced to complete tasks—like snapping a photo with Mr. Kennedy.

Wednesday, October 2, was a day off due to parent-teacher conferences, but the Homecoming spirit picked right back up on Thursday, October 3. It was Color Wars day, with each class assigned a specific color to wear from head to toe. After lunch came an intense Jenga tournament, with two students from each class battling it out in the ultimate balance challenge.

Then came Friday, October 4—the big day everyone had been waiting for: Homecoming! Raider Pride Day is always a favorite. Football players wore their jerseys and handed their travel jerseys to a friend or special someone. The energy was high with the tug-of-war tournament, where classes competed fiercely for

spirit stick points.

For many students, sixth period dragged on as they eagerly waited for 1:30 p.m.—the moment they could leave for the parade and pep rally in Lawrence. Students, staff, and community members lined the parade route, cheering for floats filled with Raider spirit—and candy, of course! Everyone then made their way to the football field for the pep rally, which featured fun games like "The Masked Singer" and a touching moment where the seniors passed down the traditions and values of being a Raider to the kindergarteners.

The pep rally must have worked—energy was high going into the evening's game against Nebraska Lutheran, and the Raiders delivered a spectacular performance, winning 80–26. After the victory, Coach Brian Blevins gathered the team for a quick speech before the coronation ceremony began.

The coronation started with class representatives walking down the field, each introduced with a short summary of their school involvement. Then, with all the seniors gathered, the crown bearers made their way down to present the crowns to this year's Homecoming royalty: Aidan Zikmund and Kara Menke.

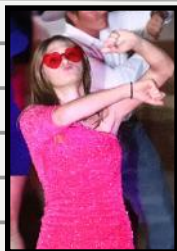
Finally, it was dance time! Students headed to the elementary school to show off their best moves and celebrate an unforgettable week. All in all, this year's Homecoming was a huge success—a week packed with fun, school spirit, and a major football win. After a night of dancing, students could finally unwind and fall asleep, dreaming of all the memories they had made.



## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:

"Something new I tried this year for homecoming was being more dedicated to the dress-up days and trying to get more of my classmates involved in the fun."

-Codi Cannaday, Freshman



**Left:** First graders Kynslee Janda and Beckett Bohlen say "Squish the Knights!" while dressed up as Play-Doh containers during the homecoming parade.

**Below:** Some of the junior high volleyball girls celebrate with confetti poppers on their Barbie-themed float during the homecoming parade, which won first place.



**Above:** Senior Homecoming Royalty Candidates, Sawyer Cox, Josie Hajny, Valentina Koehler, Kara Menke, Cody Brockman, Addison McCloskey, Aidan Zikmund, and Carson Vaughn pose for a silly picture for the local newspaper.



**Left:** Freshmen Kaliahna Cassell and Victoria Koehler are shown dancing to "When I Was Your Man" by Bruno Mars at the homecoming dance.

**Right:** During the homecoming pep rally, senior Cody Brockman lets the people around him know that he won the game by putting his hand in the air.



**Below:** Coaches played their own version of "The Masked Singer" by being dressed in inflatable animal costumes during the homecoming pep rally. The losers, which were secretly all of them, had to do a cartwheel in their costumes.



**Above:** Fourth graders Harper Haba, Sawyer Menke, Luke Kathman, and Harley Furrey lead their class with a sign that says "Lights Out, Knights Out, Go Raiders!" during the homecoming parade.



**Above:** Paige Huston (10), Natalia Wehrman (10), and Cassidy Huston (12) dance the night away with each other at the homecoming dance.





# GRADUATION

This school year flew by, and before we knew it, our seniors were signing off and stepping out to start something new. From the moment they began their journey in preschool to the day they crossed the graduation stage, our staff has been preparing them for the world beyond high school. As the Class of 2025 wrapped up their final year, they came to realize this was more than an ending—it was the beginning of something new. Though it's bittersweet to see them go, we're proud and excited to see where their paths will lead.

At Lawrence-Nelson, we've worked to instill responsibility, respect, dedication, and determination in each student. By the time our seniors reached graduation, they had gained essential life skills—skills that will guide them through new beginnings. Their time here laid a strong foundation for future success and discovery.

Graduation is not just a milestone—it's a turning point. A chance to celebrate what's been accomplished and to look ahead at what's just beginning. This year's ceremony took place on Saturday, May 10, 2025. Seniors walked into the gym one last time as Raiders to the traditional tune of "Pomp and Circumstance." Superintendent Mr. Stephen Grizzle and senior class president Josie Hajny welcomed everyone, with Josie sharing heartfelt and humorous memories from their time together as a class.

Next, Principal Mr. Dan Kennedy honored the top academic achievers. Josie Hajny earned salutatorian honors, and Valentina Koehler was named valedictorian. Both students delivered speeches that reflected on their past experiences and offered inspiring words for the new chapters awaiting them.

The most emotional part of the ceremony came as the seniors

handed flowers to their loved ones while “Broken Window Serenade” by Whiskey Myers played. With gratitude in their hearts, they searched the crowd to thank those who had supported them along the way. Tears, smiles, and long hugs filled the room as the Class of 2025 showed appreciation to the people who helped shape their journey.

Afterward, the senior class video played, showing just how far they had come. Laughter echoed throughout the gym as the video celebrated their growth and the memories they made together. Then the high school choir performed “The Climb” by Miley Cyrus, echoing the determination and courage it takes to begin a new chapter.

Finally, it was time for the seniors to close this chapter and step confidently into the next. Principal Kennedy confirmed that each senior had met the graduation requirements, and as their names were called, they crossed the stage to receive their diplomas from L-N School Board President Mr. Lance Williams.

Together, they turned their tassels, officially becoming Lawrence-Nelson graduates. The gym filled with pride and applause as “Viva la Vida” by Coldplay played. Before leaving the gym as Raiders for the last time, seniors exchanged final hugs and thank yous with staff—those who had helped them start this journey and prepare them for the next.

Now, all that remained were the graduation parties and a few end-of-year traditions. The Class of 2025 has proven they are ready to take on whatever comes next. As they start something new, we hope they carry forward the lessons, friendships, and memories from their time at Lawrence-Nelson. This is not the end—it's the start of something new.



**Above:** Hayden Mazour and Paisley Lowery walk down the aisle in front of their friends and family. They soon will become L-N graduates.



**Above:** Emily Jacobitz and Madalyn Kennedy listen to the speeches given by their classmates, waiting patiently to receive their diplomas.



**Front Row (L to R):**

Addison McCloskey, Josie Hajny, Valentina Koehler, Hanna Skinner, Emily Jacobitz, Cassidy Huston, Onja Myers, and Paisley Lowery.

**Back Row (L to R):**

Kara Menke, Aidan  
Zikmund, Hayden Mazour,  
Carter Griffis, Sawyer Cox,  
Cody Brockman, Carson  
Vaughn, William Schaefer,  
and Madalyn Kennedy.

**Below:** Senior Addison McCloskey breaks down when it comes time to say thank you and goodbye to her little sister Kaliahna Cassell (9). These two were inseparable and will have to find a way to adjust with not having each other nearby.

**Class Flower:**  
Blue-Tipped Rose

### Class Colors:

Royal Blue  
Baby Blue

**Class Song:**

"Viva la Vida  
- Coldplay-



### Junior Honor Guards:

Owen Smiley and Caden Culbertson

### Junior Ushers:

Kole Thompson and Natalie Jacobitz



**Valedictorian:**

Valuedictorian:  
Valentina Koehler

**Salutatorian:**

Josie Hajny



**Above:** Carter Griffis accepts his diploma from school board president Lance Williams. It was hard work, but he did it!



**Above:** The boys of the senior class, Carson Vaughn, Hayden Mazour, Carter Griffis, Sawyer Cox, Cody Brockman, William Schaefer, and Aidan Zikmund, get together for one last photo as L-N Raiders before the graduation ceremony begins.



**Above:** William Schaefer and Onja Myers take a final walk across the gym, ready to take on this next step in their life's journey.

**Left:** Mr. Decker Brown and Mr. Brian Blevins have an emotional moment with graduated seniors Carson Vaughn and Aidan Zikmund during the staff's recessional line. They have been through a lot together.

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:

"One thing new that I did this year was trying to push myself even more with my academics by taking a variety of different college classes."

- Kara Menke, Senior-





# ARCHERY

**Below:** The middle school team won third place in the 3D competition and 5th place in the Bullseye competition at State. They received an invite to shoot as a team at the National competition in Sandy, Utah at the end of the school year.

**Right:** Breckyn Bohlen (5) and Lexi Arbogast (4) shoot side-by-side in the 3D competition at Nationals.

**Below:** Jasper Elledge (9) and Kaden Grams (10) focus on each shot at the State competition in Lincoln.



**Left:** Carson Kutay (6), Ariel Leyva Sigala (7), Gabriel Cannaday (5), Brooklyn DeLong (5), Harper Haba (4), Lexi Arbogast (4), and Hannah Mazour (5) shoot at the Luck of the Draw Tournament hosted by L-N.

**Below:** Jaxen Vaughn (8) comes back after collecting his arrows after his first round and prepares for his next one while at State.



**Above:** Kaden Grams (10) gets help from one of the officials when scoring his target since he did not have a shooting partner this round.



**Above:** Archers who stayed for awards at State pose with their coaches and awards after a successful competition.

**Left:** Ellie Schropfer (4), Harper Haba (4), and Myla Hubl (4) get their bows ready for their first State appearance. They shot well for it being their first year.

**Below:** Brooklyn DeLong (5) is ready for the whistle to start her first round at the State competition in Lincoln.



## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:



"This year we tried to have more friendly competition at practice. We all have a competitive side, and I think that pushed us to be our best."

-Avery Ostdiek, Eighth Grade-



**Above:** Josie Watts (6), Avery Ostdiek (8), Rayla DeLong (7), and Chizm Bilbrey (6) shoot in the Bullseye portion of the Nationals Tournament.





#### **2024-2025 High School Archery Members:**

**Front Row (L to R):** Monte Hajny (9) Madelyn Laughlin (9), and Jasper Elledge (9).

**Back Row (L to R):** Jace Hoelting (10), Kaden Grams (10), and Graym Beck (10).

**Not Pictured:** Nathan Pofahl (11).



#### **2024-2025 Junior High Archery Members:**

**Front Row (L to R):** Ariel Leyva Sigla (7), Devin Pofahl (7), Tatum Dana (6), Carson Kutay (6), Kynlee Peterson (6), and McKenzie Pofahl (6).

**Middle Row (L to R):** Rayla DeLong (7), Charley Kathman (7), William Martin (6), Anne Mazour (6), Brysen Grams (6), Axle Davidson (6), Tyler Thompson (7), and Dillon Laughlin (7).

**Back Row (L to R):** Perry Martin (8), Jaxen Vaughn (8), Avery Ostdiek (8), Konnor Ostdiek (6), Levi Corman (7), Mason Menke (6), Tripp Ostdiek (7), Kade Peters (8), and Camden Wehrman (8).

**Not Pictured:** Josie Watts (6), Chizm Bilbrey (6), Adrianna Mazour (8), and Joel Hoelting (8).



#### **2024-2025 Elementary Archery Members:**

**Front Row (L to R):** Kree Kucera (4), Sawyer Menke (4), Raegan Peterson (4), Harper Haba (4), Ellie Schropher (4), and Lexi Arbogast (4).

**Middle Row (L to R):** Easton Peterson (4), Luke Kathman (4), Gabriel Cannaday (5), Kallen Faimon (5), Myla Hubl (4), and Harley Furrey (4).

**Back Row (L to R):** Jarett Hoelting (5), Breckyn Bohlen (5), Brooklyn DeLong (5), Carson Wehrman (5), Sophia Koehler (5), Kasen Musgrave (5), Emersyn Mazour (5), and Hannah Mazour (5).

This year was truly the start of something new for many students as they picked up a bow and joined the Lawrence-Nelson Archery teams. Our archery program is a proud part of NASP— the National Archery in the Schools Program— which introduces students to archery as a lifelong sport while teaching focus, patience, and discipline. NASP is designed to build confidence and encourage students to step outside their comfort zones, opening doors to new skills and interests. The teams ranged from fourth graders all the way up to juniors. While not as many high schoolers participated, the middle school and elementary teams were large, dedicated, and incredibly successful.

For the fourth graders, this was their very first year trying archery. They set goals, learned the basics, and improved throughout the season. Fourth grader Myla Hubl shared, "Going out for archery was new, and listening to the coach and practicing hard helped me get better." This willingness to try something new, laid the foundation for exciting achievements down the road.

The middle school team had an outstanding season, earning an invite to Nationals as a team in the 3D division after placing 3rd at State. They also took 5th as a team in Bullseye, which also earned them an invite to compete at Nationals. These accomplishments came from hours of dedication, practicing both before and after school and putting in extra work outside of scheduled practices. Sixth grader Josie Watts shared her goal for next season: "I want to get one of the awards, which is a bow for the Sportsmanship Award." She knows it will take even more effort beyond practice time to reach it. The middle school team competed so well at Nationals, that they received an invite to the Worlds Tournament, but due to scheduling, they were unable to attend.

The elementary team was also extremely successful, with many young archers qualifying individually for Nationals in both 3D and Bullseye. As a team, they placed 2nd in 3D— just one arrow away from a Nationals invite— and took 3rd in Bullseye, which secured them a Nationals spot. Individual qualifiers included Kree Kucera (4), Emersyn Mazour (5), Lexi Arbogast (4), Gabriel Cannaday (5), Brooklyn DeLong (5), and Breckyn Bohlen (5) for 3D. In Bullseye, those heading to Nationals were Luke Kathman (4), Kree Kucera (4), Breckyn Bohlen (5), Emersyn Mazour (5), Sawyer Menke (4), Lexi Arbogast (4), Brooklyn DeLong (5), Jarret Hoelting (5), Hannah Mazour (5), Carson Wehrman (5), Raegan Peterson (4), and Gabriel Cannaday (5).

This season was filled with positive attitudes, determination, and a strong sense of Raider pride. The students showed why they deserved to compete at state and nationals, and they're already setting goals for how to improve even more next year. With so many new faces who stepped up to try something different, this team is building a future that promises even greater success. Their season was not just about medals and scores, but about learning, growing, and starting something new that they hope will last for years to come.



**Left:** The coaches stand proud with their Nationals Archery Team. Middle school and elementary students competed well, and some even earned an invite to the Worlds Tournament.



# ATHLETICS

As we reflect on this year's sports seasons, we see more than just records broken or games won—we see another outstanding year filled with achievements, growth, and strong bonds formed between coaches and players. Our theme, "The Start of Something New," has echoed throughout each practice, game, and competition, helping lay the foundation for a culture of excellence.

The Fall season kicked off with excitement as the football team launched into a strong start. With new players joining the roster, the team learned valuable lessons about discipline, unity, and teamwork. Countless hours of practice translated into impressive performances under the Friday night lights. The offensive line worked hard to protect the quarterback, demonstrating how a solid foundation is crucial to success. Though the season included both wins and losses, the team stood by one another and built stronger relationships along the way.

The volleyball team also had a standout season, displaying incredible skills, teamwork, and determination in the face of adversity. Under the leadership of Coach Bolte and Assistant Coach Hoelting, the team went above and beyond, showcasing the growth that came from summer practices and camps. Their season was filled with memorable moments and proved that hard work and persistence truly pay off.

Winter sports brought a new set of challenges, including several injuries, but our student-athletes rose to the occasion. The boys' basketball team, coached by Mr. Decker Brown, focused on fundamentals and endurance—key elements that led them to multiple wins throughout the season.

The girls' basketball team also found success. Their strong bond, built through friendships formed outside of sports, contributed to their teamwork and positive attitude on the court. They balanced competitiveness with sportsmanship, and their dedication was evident in every game.

Wrestling took big strides this year, growing in both numbers and strength. With new members and a tough training regimen, the team demonstrated mental toughness and resilience. As an independent program, now officially recognized as Raider Wrestling, the team proudly embraced their new identity and built a culture of hard work and grit.

As the seasons changed, Spring sports brought fresh opportunities. The track and field team, led by Coach Preston Hild and Coach Sheila McCartney, focused on setting and achieving personal and team goals. Two athletes—Sawyer Cox (12) and Ian Zikmund (8)—qualified for state, proving that determination, foundational skills, and dedication make a lasting impact.

As we close the chapter on an amazing year in athletics, we look ahead to the future with excitement. The bonds formed, the lessons learned, and the milestones achieved this year have all contributed to the strong foundation we continue to build at Lawrence-Nelson. Our athletes have shown that, through both victories and challenges, their commitment and resilience keep our sports programs thriving.

At the end of the year, we celebrate not just the wins and losses, but the spirit that has defined our athletic programs. As our students continue to try new things and reach for new goals, they inspire the next generation of Raiders. The future of Lawrence-Nelson athletics is bright—and this is only the beginning.



**Right:** Tiffany Gonzalez-Gamez (10) clears the bar and sets a new PR in pole vault. Her highest vault for the season was 6 feet.

**Left:** With the help of Kole Thompson (11), and other Raider teammates, Brandt McLaughlin (10) tries to bring down the ball carrier and keep their opponent from gaining too many yards on this play.









# FOOTBALL

## High School

### 2024-2025 High School Football Roster:

**Front Row (L to R):** Carson Vaughn (12), Aidan Zikmund (12), Carter Griffis (12), and Cody Brockman (12).

**Second Row (L to R):**

Caden Culbertson (11), Nathan Pofahl (11), Kole Thompson (11), Nathan Stokes (11), and Augustus Harrison (10).

**Third Row (L to R):** Grayhm Beck (10), Jace Hoelting (10), Caleb Griffis (10), Brandt McLaughlin (10), Ace Wulf (10), and Jackson Williams (10).

**Fourth Row (L to R):** Wyatt Frey (10), Parker Ostdiek (10), Kahlen Johnson (9), and Brody Buescher (9).

**Fifth Row (L to R):** Monte Hajny (9), Kolten Menke (9), Cooper Heikkinen (9), and Jasper Elledge (9).

**Back Row (L to R):** Assistant Coach Decker Brown, Assistant Coach Josh Himmelberg, Head Coach Brian Blevins, Assistant Coach Preston Hild, and Assistant Coach Nolan Kawata.



This year marked the start of something new for the Raider Football team. With many key players graduating the year before, the 2024–2025 season began with a fresh group of athletes and a sense of anticipation for what was to come. The team finished with a strong 5–4 record, ending the season with 1,180 passing yards and 1,466 rushing yards.

With only one returning starter, it was a year defined by new faces, new roles, and new opportunities. Freshmen and sophomores stepped into big shoes and rose to the challenge, setting the foundation for the future of Raider Football. Coach Brian Blevins commented, "Coming into this season, we knew that we would be very inexperienced. We also knew we were starting a new quarterback who had never played an 8-man game before." This, along with so many new faces playing for the first time in moments that mattered, the team knew it would be a season of transition. From the team that first stepped on the field to the team that stepped off it for the last time this season, the growth and development were incredible. Many of these athletes still have one year, with many having two years left to play in the program. Coach Blevins stated, "with so much potential ahead, this will be the epitome of the start of something new."

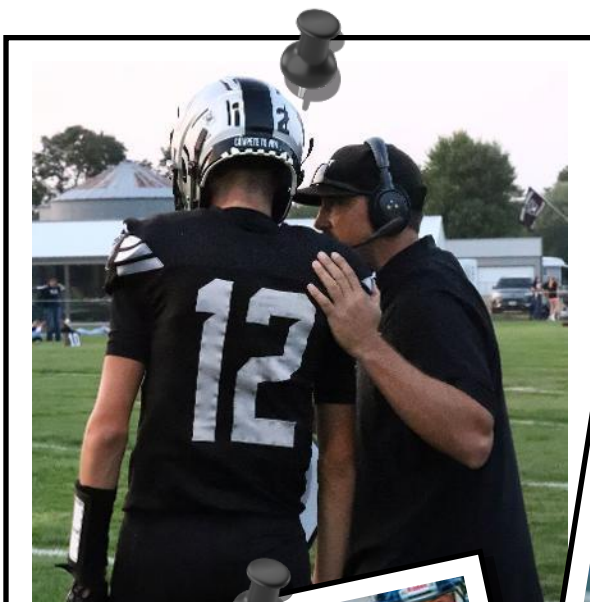
Over the course of the season, this team evolved—growing not just in skill, but in connection. They learned to rely on one another and built trust on and off the field. Freshman Cooper Heikkinen reflected, "I think the season went well. I wish we had made it a little farther in the playoffs, but overall we had a very good season

and accomplished so many goals together." Those goals weren't just about winning—they were about becoming better teammates, creating unity, and practicing with purpose. The upperclassmen led the way, mentoring the younger players and helping them find their place within the team. "My goal was to get onto the field and help my team," said Heikkinen, "and by the end of the season, I believe I succeeded."

Although the season came to a close, the memories and lessons will carry on. Senior Aidan Zikmund shared, "My favorite memory this season was being able to see my teammates truly enjoy the sport and sharing the experience with them." For many, the season wasn't just about stats or scores—it was about the bond formed through long practices, bus rides, and game-day triumphs and setbacks. The team became a family, one that welcomed new members and created a space where everyone could grow.

Coach Blevins summarized it well: "I think you always feel you could have done better; that is human nature, to never be satisfied. But the obstacles and challenges this team overcame to have yet another winning season and playoff berth were very impressive. This group of individuals found a way to overcome their challenges." As the team looks ahead, they'll carry the progress of this season with them. With strong leadership, eager underclassmen, and the experience gained from a year of change, Raider Football is set up for even greater things. This season wasn't just an ending—it was the beginning of something new.





**Left:** Coach Brian Blevins gives Cody Brockman (12) a pep talk before going out onto the field with the next play.

**Below:** Aidan Zikmund (12) runs the football to gain yardage. Aidan finished out the season with 15 catches.



**Left:** Wyatt Frey (10) takes the ball and runs through the opposing team while faking them out to gain yardage. He ended the season with 1,258 rushing yards.

**Below:** The starters huddle up at the beginning of the BDS game to pump each other up and get ready for a tough fight.



**Above Left:** Caden Culbertson (11) breaks through the banner at the beginning of the game. He's been a crucial leader for the team this year.

**Left:** Koltan Menke (9) catches the ball and runs as fast as he can while Ace Wulf (10) makes a big block so that he can break through the defense.

## SCOREBOARD:

### OPPONENT:

### RESULTS:

|                   |              |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Howells Dodge     | Lost (36-8)  |
| Blue Hill         | Won (58-22)  |
| Wilcox- Hildreth  | Won (38-12)  |
| BDS               | Lost (42-22) |
| Deshler           | Won (64-38)  |
| Nebraska Lutheran | Won (80-26)  |
| High Plains       | Lost (47-20) |
| Giltner           | Won (72-20)  |
| High Plains       | Lost (22-20) |



**Above:** Jackson Williams (10) plans out his route to find an unobstructed way to the endzone.

**Below:** Jace Hoelting (9) takes off and runs his assigned route so that the quarterback can find him and get him the ball.



## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:

"Something new that I tried this season was to just work my hardest on and off the field. Participating in weights has also helped make me stronger."

- Cooper Heikinen, Freshman -





## The Start of Something New: A Closing Reflection

As we turn the final pages of this yearbook, we pause to reflect on a year defined by growth, transformation, and new beginnings—true to our theme, "The Start of Something New." This school year marked a bold step forward as Lawrence-Nelson became independent from South Central Unified School District #5. With this transition came uncertainty, but also hope—and as the year unfolded, it proved to be full of fresh opportunities, strong connections, and memorable experiences.

## Celebrating Growth and Change

This year presented many challenges, from students stepping into unfamiliar roles to teachers taking on new responsibilities, including coaching for the first time. Students tried new sports, joined new clubs, and welcomed unfamiliar faces into the halls. With those changes came new friendships, as students supported and guided one another through the transitions. These moments helped shape the tight-knit community we've built.

Throughout the year, we've witnessed countless personal victories—some big, some small. Whether academic achievements, athletic milestones, or daily acts of perseverance, each moment represented meaningful growth. These experiences will carry forward into our futures and become part of the legacy we leave behind.

## Recognizing Transitions

This year was also a time of heartfelt transitions. We watched friends and classmates celebrate their final performances, athletic competitions, and school days. We said goodbye to graduates—future leaders, innovators, and changemakers—who demonstrated outstanding spirit and resilience in everything they pursued. Their commitment, whether in academics, athletics, or community service, is an example of the dedication that defines a Raider.

## Looking Ahead

Our seniors now step into a future shaped by the lessons and memories of this year. Underclassmen will continue what has been started, carrying forward traditions, goals, and leadership. As one chapter closes, another opens, and this yearbook serves as a snapshot of a story still unfolding.

We also recognize and thank the staff and community members who supported us every step of the way—from custodians to coaches, from teachers to parents. Their encouragement, time, and dedication made it possible for students to thrive both in and out of the classroom.

## Closing Sentiment

Every ending is the beginning of something new. As we move forward, we carry with us the lessons, memories, and strength gained throughout this year. Let this yearbook be a reminder of all we have accomplished—and an inspiration for what lies ahead.

With the foundation we've built as Lawrence-Nelson Raiders, there's no limit to what we can achieve. This truly is the start of something new.

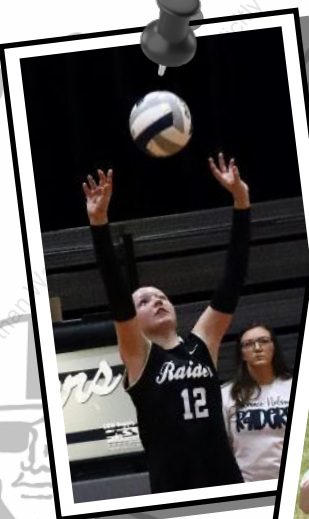


**Above:** Once a year, the entire school gets together to take the school picture for the website. It's fun to get everyone together at one time.

**Right:** Seniors Addison McCloskey and Hanna Skinner talk about the volleyball season at the homecoming pep rally.



**Below:** Fourth graders Myla Hubl, Lexi Arbogast, Ellie Schropfer, and Harper Haba (also known as the 4 amigos) celebrate after finishing first in their heat for the 4x1 relay at the elementary's field day.



**Above:** Stella Williams (8) sets up the ball for her middle hitter in a close match.



**Right:** Coach Adam Theer strategizes with Brody Buescher (9) before he enters a tough wrestling match.



**Left:** Senior Valentina Koehler and Mrs. Alayna Ham take their last picture together after being TeamMates for the last few years.