



September 2026

Principal's Note

Happy September! What an absolute joy it was to welcome everyone back into the building and kick off the new school year with so much energy and enthusiasm. Seeing 94% of our students and families at Open House was fantastic, setting an incredible pace for the months ahead and proving just how strong our school-home partnership really is. A huge thank you goes out to our incredible families for staying in close communication with our teachers and main office, as well as our outstanding custodial team, who worked tirelessly to make our building shine. It takes a whole team to start the year this strong, and we are off to a flying start!

None of this magic would be possible without our extraordinary staff members, who go above and beyond every single day to make learning engaging, supportive, and welcoming for every child. Their dedication ensures that student growth remains at the heart of everything we do. Four Mile is a truly special place, and we are so proud of our school, our culture, and the wonderful community we build together every day. Thank you for bringing your positive energy, your trust, and your wonderful children to our school. We can't wait to make this our best year yet!

Principal Steenhoek

New Four Mile At-Home Reading Program

We start our new at-home reading program on September 1. Your child will bring home a monthly reading log. This is for ALL grades PK-5. If you read to your child for 20 minutes rather than your child reading independently, that still "counts!" Mrs. Steenhoek is visiting all of the K-5 classrooms to share information about the program this week. Prizes will be provided to all of the children who complete the log by the end of September.

Four Mile Elementary Golf Ball Drop Fundraiser

Four Mile Elementary, the Four Mile PTA, and the Southeast Polk Kiwanis Club are excited to team up for our Golf Ball Drop Fundraiser to raise money for new, accessible playground equipment! Our goal is to purchase a piece of playground equipment, featuring integrated seating, safety rails, and a ramp-free level entry designed for children of all physical abilities. With your help, we can make our playground a fun and inclusive space for every student!

How It Works & Pricing

Cost: \$5.00 per ball, or 5 balls for \$20.00. Ball tickets are purchased online.

Prize: The ball dropped closest to the pin wins \$1,000!

Event Details: The Golf Ball Drop takes place on Saturday, October 10, 2026, at Terrace Hills Golf Course in Altoona, IA. (Winners do not need to be present to win).

Class Competition & Pizza Party!

Our goal is for every student to sell 20 golf balls. To add to the excitement, the class that sells the most golf balls will win a Kiwanis-sponsored Pizza Party!

How to Participate

Purchase Golf Balls Online: Sales officially start today and go through Thursday, October 8. Buy your balls online through the QR code on the flyer that is coming home with your child.

Track Your Sales: Use your child's Golf Ball Drop recording sheet to keep track of sales.

Turn In Recording Sheets: Have your student return their completed paper recording sheet to their teacher by Thursday, October 8 so their class gets credit for the pizza party!

Thank you for your continued support in making Four Mile Elementary an incredible place for our students. Let's get selling and win that pizza party!



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Lighthouse Keepers

Our Watch DOGS program has a new name and a new invitation! We are looking for moms, dads, grandparents and other guardians to volunteer to help make Four Mile a safe and supportive place for our students. These volunteers will be referred to as Lighthouse Keepers. By volunteering just one half-day each semester (October 1 - April 1), you can lend a hand by listening to students read, practicing sight words or math facts, playing small-group games, and/or assisting teachers in their classrooms. *Please note that a background check is required for all volunteers.* Please contact Michele Simpson, our Instructional Coach, to sign up. Her e-mail address is michele.simpson@southeastpolk.org or school phone number: 515.265.1972 ext 5452.

Wednesday Morning- Early Bus Routes

To help support our district's Wednesday busing schedule, please note that elementary students will be picked up at their bus stops approximately 15 minutes earlier than usual on Wednesday mornings.

Once the buses arrive at school, students will head to the gym to sit comfortably with their homeroom classmates under full staff supervision. To make this extra morning time both peaceful, all students will spend this time reading until the 8:35 AM bell rings. **We would greatly appreciate your help in making sure your child always has two favorite books packed in their backpack, especially on Wednesday mornings!**

Family Drop-Off and Pick-Up Loop

Our Four Mile community is adapting to the new drop off and pick-up routine. Thank you for your kindness, patience and support as we smooth out the bumps. To keep this momentum going and ensure every student gets

to/from school safely and efficiently, please keep these three quick tips in mind:

1. Drive to the Farthest Cone: Please pull all the way forward to the end of the line. Our duty staff are stationed there and ready to help unbuckle, assist with car seats, and get your kiddos out safely.
2. Close the Gaps: Pull up as close to the car ahead of you as safely possible so we can unload multiple vehicles at once.
3. Passenger-Side Exit: Please have your Four Mile student sit on the passenger side of the back seat. This allows them to step directly onto the safe sidewalk instead of exiting into traffic.

We truly appreciate your partnership in keeping our car line moving and our kids safe!

Financial Assistance for Students' Breakfast and Lunch

Families can apply for Free/Reduced price meal benefits at any time throughout the school year. If you need assistance paying for meals, please submit an application. If you have a change in income, you can always reapply.

2 ways to submit:

1. Online from a computer at schoolcafe.com

2. Download the SchoolCafe by PrimeroEdge app for your smartphone *

**We recommend the phone app as the app also allows you to see your child(ren)'s meal purchases, set low balance alerts and set spending limits. You can also see instantly what your child(ren)'s meal eligibility is. After submittal, click on Eligibility Info on the left panel.*

A few items you will need to help make the process easy and have a successful submittal:

1. Your child(ren)'s name and date of birth. Helpful information would be your child(ren)'s school ID and the school they will be attending this Fall. This can be found on your Campus Portal. Most students grades 6 – 12th grade know this number as it is their lunch PIN number.
2. You must register for SchoolCafe. [Here are step-by-step instructions to complete your registration.](#)
3. Here are step-by-step instructions on how to complete the application. [English Instructions](#) and [Spanish Instructions](#).

*If you are not able to complete the online application and are needing a paper version, please email school.nutrition@southeastpolk.org or call 515-957-3432.

	Breakfast	Lunch
Student Meal	\$1.90	\$3.00
Reduced Eligible Student Meal	\$0.30	\$0.40
2nd Full Meal	\$2.75	\$5.25
Extra Entrée		\$2.70
Adult or guest meal	\$2.75	\$5.25
Milk	\$0.50	\$0.50

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From Four Mile PTA

We enjoyed meeting some of you at Open House night! If you would like to sign up to **become a PTA member** and enter for a **chance to win a \$50 Gift Card**, there's still time! Here is the link:
<https://forms.gle/Hz7tWSgj51GWmXwd6>

The deadline is **Tuesday, Sept. 8th at 6:00pm**, which is our **next PTA meeting!** We meet in the **Four Mile Library**, but we also will send out a Google Meet link if you'd rather join virtually. We would love to see you there! We will have **free childcare and free snacks!**

Our meetings are **casual**, and there's **NO PRESSURE** to volunteer - **YOU CHOOSE** how involved you want to be! It is also a great way to meet other Four Mile families!

Here are a few more dates to put in your calendar:

PTA Meeting: Tuesday, Oct. 6th at 6:00 PM in the Four Mile Library and virtual option

Fun Run: Oct. 23rd during the school day (rain date: Oct. 26th): be on the lookout for more information and a schedule coming soon!

PTA Meeting: Tuesday, Nov. 10th at 6:00 PM in the Four Mile Library and virtual option

Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FourMileElementaryPTA> to stay up to date! Also, feel free to reach out to us at any time via email: fourmilepta@gmail.com

Upcoming Dates

Tuesday, September 1- FAST & aReading Fall screening begins
Monday, September 7- Labor day- No school
Tuesday, September 8- PTA meeting, 6pm
Tuesday, September 8- First day of school for Little Rams Preschool
Friday, September 11- Wear your favorite ISU or Iowa colors!
Thursday, September 24- Picture day, PK-5 (8:30am-3:00pm)
Monday, September 28 iReady Math testing begins
Monday, September 28 - Friday- October 2- Homecoming week
Thursday, October 2- National Custodian/maintenance appreciation day
Friday, October 2- National School Custodian Day
Tuesday, October 6- 3rd graders Fire Safety House with PH Fire Dept
Tuesday, October 6- National coaches & Instructional coaches day
Tuesday, October 6- PTA meeting, 6pm
Saturday, October 10- Kiwanis Ball Drop at Terrace Hills Golf Course- big fundraiser for Four Mile!
Tuesday, October 13- Fall parent teacher conferences
Thursday, October 15- Fall parent teacher conferences
Friday, October 16- No school for staff or students
Monday, October 19- No school for students. Staff development day
Monday, October 21- Unity day- wear orange
Thursday, October 22- Picture retakes, PK-5 (8:00am-12pm)
Friday, October 23-PTA Fun Run
Monday, October 26- PTA Fun run (Raindate)
Thursday, October 29-Kindergarten field trip to Howell's Pumpkin Patch
Friday, October 30- Fall Party Day
Saturday, October 31- PTA Vendor Fair at Four Mile