

PONCA PUBLIC SCHOOLS



ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

Jackson School (PK-2)

223 North John St.
PO Box 67
Jackson, NE 68743
(402) 632-4276

Ponca School (3-12)

505 W. 3rd St.
PO Box 568
Ponca, NE 68770
(402) 755-5700

DISTRICT DESCRIPTION

The Ponca Public Schools is an accredited PK-12 public school district in Northeast Nebraska. With an enrollment of 442 students, the district is large enough to offer outstanding educational opportunities and small enough to personalize education for each student. The district comprises of two schools: Jackson School, serving students in grades PK-2 and Ponca School, serving students in grades 3-12. Competent and caring teachers provide outstanding learning opportunities and place high expectations on their classes. Curricular offerings include basic skills instruction for all students and specialized courses in high school. Teachers participate in Professional Learning Communities to focus on individual student outcomes and develop professionally. Technology plays an important part of each teacher's program with computer-assisted reading and math instruction, computer classes, and industrial technology offerings. The district operates a 1:1 initiative with Chromebooks for every student PK-12. The majority of students from Ponca attend two or four-year colleges upon graduation. Extra-curricular activities begin in grade seven and include instrumental and vocal music, a wide variety of athletics, drama, speech, FBLA, and student government. The Ponca Public Schools enjoys positive working relationships with the City of Ponca, Village of Jackson, Village of Waterbury, Village of Martinsburg, Ponca Community Education Foundation, Better Ponca Community Foundation, Ponca State Park, Ponca Athletic Boosters, Ponca Music Boosters, Ponca Area Community Club, Ponca Ministerial Association, Youth Sports Organizations, Ponca Recreation, local businesses, and many individual patrons.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Kenton Book, President
Shawn Fethkenher, Vice President
Monte Burki
Richard Dohma
John Gill
Phil Kramper

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This report is published to inform the patrons of the Ponca Public Schools and fulfillment of accreditation guidelines of the Nebraska Department of Education. The report will identify key components of the district's demographics, membership, finance, improvement goals, and performance. It is our hope that patrons become aware of the district's accomplishments and areas of improvement.

DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

The Ponca Public School District is committed to building a solid educational foundation for ALL individuals by providing a quality learning environment and promoting standards of excellence.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GOALS

1. Utilize PLC time for professional development
 - Visit with current PLC team members about cycling off team
 - Add new PLC team members if needed
 - Train new PLC team members on PLC process
 - Create a set calendar/schedule for PLC process
2. Addressing high ability learners
 - Discuss creating a common intervention block at the elementary level to accommodate interventions and enrichment activities
3. Increasing literacy across the curriculum
 - Discuss creating a common intervention block at the elementary level to accommodate interventions and enrichment activities
 - Use PLC time to create common ELOs across literacy
4. Aligning our instructional model with observations
 - Administration and teacher collaboration
5. Make character education more consistent
 - Create a system of daily homerooms for the secondary level
 - Implement character education into the curriculum at the elementary level

DISTRICT ENROLLMENT

The district had maintained a steady enrollment over several years, which dropped slightly over the past four years. Enrollment ranged from 431-468 students (PK-12). Below is a breakdown of total enrollment, by grade, for the last 15 school years.

This year we have three students getting services at home that are included in the PK count.

	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
2008-09	26	29	31	31	40	34	26	35	26	40	29	35	27	31	440
2009-10	22	37	28	30	31	35	33	26	35	28	42	30	33	25	435
2010-11	25	30	35	27	31	32	36	32	27	33	27	40	28	35	438
2011-12	17	33	26	38	27	34	32	36	36	24	32	26	40	30	431
2012-13	31	26	33	25	39	29	35	37	41	36	26	34	29	38	459
2013-14	25	36	28	32	24	43	28	35	37	43	32	28	23	29	452
2014-15	26	39	31	31	32	25	43	28	37	39	44	35	26	31	467
2015-16	34	21	34	31	33	31	24	42	32	37	36	45	36	26	462
2016-17	30	37	20	32	31	34	35	23	40	30	39	34	41	32	458
2017-18	22	33	38	24	35	31	35	36	23	42	32	39	35	43	468
2018-19	27	26	31	38	26	38	31	38	40	24	42	34	36	35	466
2019-20	32	26	25	29	37	27	38	30	34	39	23	43	32	36	453
2020-21	31	36	30	25	29	39	28	38	31	33	37	23	42	29	453
2021-22	23	41	34	26	26	28	41	29	40	28	31	37	26	39	451
2022-23	27	30	37	33	27	29	29	40	30	37	29	30	37	27	442

ENROLLMENT BY SCHOOL COMPARISON

Fall Membership as of October 1, 2022 (442)

School	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Jackson	119	117	122	114	124	126	127	+1
Ponca	124	137	133	132	134	124	125	+1
High School	216	215	211	207	195	201	190	-11
District Total	459	469	466	453	453	451	442	-9

Enrollment by Grade and Breakdown by Gender

229 Boys / 213 Girls

JACKSON ELEM		PONCA ELEM		HIGH SCHOOL	
Grade Level	<u>Total in Grade</u>	Grade Level	<u>Total in Grade</u>	Grade Level	<u>Total in Grade</u>
-2	$\frac{3}{2/1}$	3	$\frac{27}{15/12}$	7	$\frac{30}{18/12}$
-1	$\frac{24}{10/14}$	4	$\frac{29}{13/16}$	8	$\frac{37}{20/17}$
0	$\frac{30}{13/17}$	5	$\frac{29}{13/16}$	9	$\frac{29}{15/14}$
1	$\frac{37}{18/19}$	6	$\frac{40}{22/18}$	10	$\frac{30}{19/11}$
2	$\frac{33}{20/13}$			11	$\frac{37}{20/17}$
				12	$\frac{27}{11/16}$
63 Boys / Girls 64 = 127		63 Boys / 62 Girls = 125		103 Boys / 87 Girls = 190	

OPTION IN, OPTION OUT, AND NET OPTION STUDENTS

(PK cannot be included)

OPTION IN 100 – OPTION OUT 17 = NET OPTION OF 83 STUDENTS

Option In Students 2022-2023							
Grade	Option In	Allen 26-0070	E - H 26-0561	H - N 14-0008	Homer 22-0031	SSC 22-0011	L-C-C 14-0054
KG	6	1		4		1	
01	6	1	1	1	1	4	
02	6		2	2	1	1	
03	5	2		2		1	
04	5			4	1		
05	10	3	1	4	1	1	
06	10	2	1	3	3	1	
07	8	1		4	1	2	
08	17	4	1	10	2		
09	5			2	2	1	
10	7	2		3	2		
11	6		3	3			2
12	5	1		2	2		
Total	100	17	9	44	16	12	2

Option Out Students 2022-2023					
Grade	Option Out	Allen 26-0070	E - H 26-0561	SSC 22-0011	Wakefield 90-0560
KG					
01					
02	2	1			1
03	1			1	
04					
05	3			2	1
06	1	1			
07	2	2			
08	1	1			
09					
10	4	3		1	
11					
12	3	2	1		
Total	17	10	1	4	2

COMPARING THE NUMBER OF OPTION STUDENTS TO PAST YEARS

	In	Out	Net Option
2009-10	70	30	+40
2010-11	73	25	+48
2011-12	70	24	+46
2012-13	86	18	+68
2013-14	94	27	+67
2014-15	123	25	+98
2015-16	113	31	+82
2016-17	105	26	+79
2017-18	108	21	+87
2018-19	110	17	+93
2019-20	109	13	+96
2020-21	109	13	+96
2021-22	103	17	+86
2022-23	100	17	+83

Exempt Schools (Home School)

One student graduated during the 21-22 school year and two families (3 students) returned to Ponca Public Schools this fall and do not have a home school. Two additional families started home schooling at the beginning of the 22-23 school year (2 children). One family had an 8 year old they already home schooled and now have a 6 year old that is also being home schooled.

2021-2022		2022-2023	
Students	Families	Students	Families
15	7	14	7

Ages of Home Schooled Children

Age	# of Students	Gender
6	2	$\frac{2}{1/1}$
7	2	$\frac{2}{1/1}$
8	1	$\frac{1}{0/1}$
9	2	$\frac{2}{0/2}$
11	2	$\frac{2}{0/2}$
13	1	$\frac{1}{1/0}$
14	2	$\frac{2}{0/2}$
16	1	$\frac{1}{1/0}$
17	1	$\frac{1}{1/0}$
	14	5 Boys / 9 Girls

Census 2022 Report

School district's official consolidated census report of children. The purpose of the form is to report the count of children age **five** through **eighteen** years of age, county and school district in which they reside **on June 30th**.

Ages	Dixon (26)	Dakota (22)
5	22	4
6	25	6
7	27	3
8	21	3
9	21	3
10	23	5
11	22	4
12	25	4
13	20	7
14	21	6
15	23	2
16	28	7
17	16	5
18	17	4

SUMMER SCHOOL (2021-2022 CDC DATA) **Aggregate Number of Days**

2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022	
Students	# Days	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days
7	84	7	84	2	24	13	156	8	96

EARLY CHILDHOOD

2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023	
Full Day Early Childhood Hours Per Year	Qualified 4-Year Olds	Full Day Early Childhood Hours Per Year	Qualified 4-Year Olds	Full Day Early Childhood Hours Per Year	Qualified 4-Year Olds	Full Day Early Childhood Hours Per Year	Qualified 4-Year Olds
588	31	592	31	581	23	595	24

58 Free Lunches and 48 Reduced Lunches (Free and Reduced=106)

Jackson Elementary	<u>127 Students</u>	Free Lunches	17	Reduced Lunches	16	F/R=33
Ponca Elementary	<u>125 Students</u>	Free Lunches	20	Reduced Lunches	16	F/R=36
Ponca High School	<u>190 Students</u>	Free Lunches	<u>21</u>	Reduced Lunches	<u>16</u>	F/R=25
Totals	442		58		48	F/R=106

Comparison Years of Free/Reduced Lunches

School	2018-2019			2019-2020			2020-2021			2021-2022			2022-2023		
	Free	Red.	Total	Free	Red.	Total	Free	Red.	Total	Free	Red.	Total	Free	Red.	Total
JACKSON	17	14	31	26	13	39	18	11	29	15	5	20	17	16	33
PONCA	21	17	38	11	15	26	15	10	25	11	6	17	20	16	36
HIGH SCHOOL	37	10	47	24	20	44	31	13	44	17	8	25	21	16	37
District Totals	75	41	116	61	48	109	64	28	98	43	19	62	58	48	106

Free/Reduced Lunch Counts by Grade Level 2022-2023

GRADE	Free Meals	Reduced Meals	Not Eligible	Total
PK	3	5	19	27
KG	7	2	21	30
01	3	2	32	37
02	4	7	22	33
03	6	5	16	27
04	7	2	20	29
05	3	3	23	29
06	4	6	30	40
07	1	4	25	30
08	5	1	31	37
09	3	3	23	29
10	3	2	25	30
11	5	4	28	37
12	4	2	21	27
Total	58	48	336	442

SCHOOL NUTRITION

Ponca Public School District operates two kitchens (Jackson and Ponca) for the purpose of preparing and serving school lunches. The Jackson kitchen has two staff members and the Ponca kitchen is staffed with four employees. The district participates in the Educational service Unit Coordinating Council’s Food Cooperative, which provides for lower food and supply prices through the statewide competitive bidding process. The district averaged 355 meals per day during the 21-22 school year with a total of 62,384 meals served.

2021 - 2022										
Month	Days Meals Served	Reimbursement	Ave. Attendance PK-2nd	Ave. Attendance 3rd-12th	Total Average Attendance	Paid Meals	Free Meals	Reduced	Total Meals	Total Enrollment
August	14	\$21,989.02	109	319	428		5093		5093	442
Sept	21	\$32,994.33	109	326	435		7642		7642	441
October	19	\$29,359.00	108	311	419		6800		6800	442
November	20	\$30,373.61	108	307	415		7035		7035	439
December	15	\$22,416.46	106	312	418		5192		5192	440
January	19	\$31,047.81	108	310	418		6805		6805	443
February	19	\$31,435.62	108	312	420		6890		6890	444
March	20	\$32,881.93	111	310	421		7207		7207	443
April	19	\$29,492.00	111	311	422		6464		6464	442
May	10	\$14,855.50	112	293	405		3256		3256	412
TOTAL	176	\$276,845.28	109.00	311.10	420.10	0	62384	0	62384	438.80

TOTAL MEALS SERVED PER YEAR

Year	Total Days Served	Total Meals	AVG Meals Per Day
2021-2022	176	62,384	354
2020-2021	175	56,459	323
2019-2020	128	42,815	334
2018-2019	170	57,201	336
2017-2018	173	63,789	369
2016-2017	174	61,545	354
2015-2016	186	62,708	337
2014-2015	174	64,251	369
2013-2014	174	63,304	364
2012-2013	175	63,928	365
2011-2012	174	64,158	369
2010-2011	177	61,977	350

E-Rate

E-Rate does not include PK students or the one student that is contracted out to another school district. The student fall membership for the E-Rate is 415.

School	2016-2017		2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023	
	Totals	F/R	Totals	F/R	Totals	F/R	Totals	F/R	Totals	F/R	Totals	F/R	Totals	F/R
Jackson Elem.	89	19	95	24	95	23	80	18	91	32	101	16	100	25
Ponca Elem.	123	36	137	31	133	38	132	25	135	26	124	17	125	36
High School	216	46	214	37	211	47	207	44	194	44	201	25	190	37
District Total	428	131	446	92	439	108	419	87	420	102	426	58	415	98

Priority 1 Funds Internet Access 2020-2024

Great Plains monthly recurring cost of **\$1885.00** for Internet Access
(Network Nebraska Pays Great Plains)

Annual cost before E-Rate **\$22,620**

E-Rate pays **\$13,300.56**

Ponca Pays **\$9,319.44**

Priority 2 Funds: Backbone of our Network is eligible equipment

Currently the minimum of funds available to us is \$25,000 per school (\$75,000.00). Otherwise it is \$167.00 per student. This is a great chance to update our network switches and backbone of our district network.

Special Education
October 1, 2022

Services from ESU included in the number of students. Three students not in school getting services included in Jackson Numbers

	<i>Jackson</i>	<i>Ponca Elem.</i>	<i>Ponca High</i>	<i>Total</i>
2009-10	14	18	21	53
2010-11	24	21	18	63
2011-12	24	21	19	64
2012-13	20	26	22	68
2013-14	21	27	26	74
2014-15	20	27	27	74
2015-16	21	23	27	71
2016-17	17	25	30	72
2017-18	12	26	37	75
2018-19	10	24	33	67
2019-20	11	20	27	58
2020-21	14	16	21	51
2021-22	18	10	24	51
2022-23	17	18	19	54

Hiigh Ability Learners

**Classes through Wayne State College taught by our Instructors
(28 Students / 30 enrollments)**

Class	# of Students		Credits	Cost	Books
College Algebra	11		3	\$147.00	School
PreCalculus	15		5	\$245.00	School
Music Appreciation	4		3	\$147.00	School

**ICC Classes through Northeast Community College
(21 Students / 28 enrollments)**

Class	# of Students	Credits	Cost	Books
English Comp I	1	3	\$147.00	Student
Health	2	3	\$147.00	Student
History	9	3	\$147.00	Student
Psychology	7	3	\$147.00	Student
Speech	5	3	\$147.00	Student
Sociology	4	3	\$147.00	Student

ACE Scholarship

The scholarship pays for the student’s class but not the books

	Fall	Spring
2021-2022	5	4
2022-2023	8	

Ponca Promise by the Ponca Educational Foundation

A senior (ONLY) could potentially be reimbursed up to \$75.00 per semester. Additionally, a student must earn a B or higher or 3.0 on a 4.0 point scale to qualify. If they qualify for an ACE Scholarship they may apply to be reimbursed for their books.

	Fall	Spring
2021-2022	6	10
2022-2023		

TRANSPORTATION

The school district maintains a vehicle fleet consisting of small vehicles and buses, responsible for transporting students to and from school and school-related activities. Below is a breakdown of the vehicle fleet and miles accrued during the 2021-22 school year.

TOTAL ROUTE MILES = 59,285

TOTAL ACTIVITY MILES / SHUTTLE = 37,979

Total mileage driven between schools and for activity trips, etc. other than route miles = 37,979 miles.

Students that actually are transported and are eligible who are resident students and the option students that qualify for Free/reduced lunches that are eligible = 168 students.

We have 41 students that are not residents, or who are residents but are not eligible for transportation. These are students that are transported to Jackson on the shuttle bus.

Total annual <u>mileage</u> of school owned contracted, or leased vehicles driven over regular school bus routes to and from school <u>EXCLUDING</u> ACTIVITY TRAVEL.					
2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
62,174	60,380	45,051	57,698	59,285	

<u>SCHOOL VEHICLES</u>				
		BUSES		SMALL VEHICLES
	<u>YEAR</u>		<u>YEAR</u>	
4 ROUTE BUSES	2023	Northwest Route A	2004	Suburban Shuttle Driver
	2023	Southwest Route B	2008	Ford Van Activities
	2023	Jackson Route & Shuttle Route C	2012	Ford Van - Activities
	2023	Waterbury/Martinsburg & Shuttle Route D	2014	Ford Van - Activities
			2006	Cargo Trailer - Activities
4 ACTIVITY BUSES	2021		2019	Suburban Chevy - Activities
	20212 B		2021	Expedition Ford - Activities
	2017		2012	Ford Taurus - Special Ed
	2017 B			

CERTIFIED STAFF

ADMINISTRATION – 3.0 FTE
TEACHING STAFF – 39.30 FTE
OTHER CERTIFIED – 4 FTE
CONTRACTED – 2.0 FTE

	AVERAGE YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE		
Data Years	State	District	School
2018-2019	14.01	15.38	0.00
2019-2020	13.96	16.05	0.00
2020-2021	13.95	16.08	0.00
2021-2022	13.94	16.40	0.00
2022-2023	13.94	16.90	0.00

	AVERAGE TEACHING SALARY*		
Data Years	State	District	School
2018-2019	54,601	54,152	0
2019-2020	55,479	55,558	0
2020-2021	56,582	55,635	0
2021-2022	57,536	58,526	0
2022-2023	58,856	61,015	0

Data Years	TOTAL TEACHER FTE			TOTAL TEACHER COUNT WITH MASTER'S DEGREE			PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS WITH MASTER'S DEGREE		
	State	District	School	State	District	School	State	District	School
2018-2019	23702.34	39.00	0.00			0.00	55.99	48.72	0.00
2019-2020	23855.86	39.00	0.00	13373.79	20.00	0.00	56.06	51.28	0.00
2020-2021	23984.78	38.30	0.00	13635.42	25.00	0.00	56.85	65.27	0.00
2021-2022	23962.20	39.30	0.00	13830.51	28.00	0.00	57.72	71.25	0.00
2022-2023	23485.47	39.30	0.00	13606.88	30.00	0.00	57.94	76.34	0.00

NON-CERTIFIED STAFF

All personnel employed by the district/system in positions not reported through NSSRS	Total FTE
School administrative support staff	3.00
District/System administrative support staff	2.00
Clerical assistants to instructional personnel (non-classroom)	0.00
Teacher aides (work in classroom)	10.60
Plant operation personnel (custodians engineers etc.)	4.00
Regular bus drivers	5.00
Food service personnel (cooks supervisors etc.)	6.00
Library aide	1.50
Other personnel	1.40

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

2021 - 2022

Valuation		430,916,504		
Levies	General	1.020845		
	Special Building	0		
	Bond	0.121045		
	Total	1.14189		
	RECEIPTS (General Fund)		EXPENDITURES (General Fund)	
	Taxes Levied by the District	4,055,536	Instruction	4,034,926
	Motor Vehicle Taxes	223,924	Support Services	731,242
	Public Power Dist. Sales Tax	29,368	Administration	685,863
	Interest on Investments	6,196	Central Services	138,977
	Donations from private sources	8,620	Operations & Maintenance	539,700
	Other Local Resources	40,441	Transportation	225,904
	County/ESU Sources	26,975	State Categorical Programs	22,431
	State Sources	2,866,045	Facilities Acquisition	8,490
	Federal Sources	406,961	Debt Services	7,464
	Other Sources	5,312	Federal	389,207
			Transfers	80,000
	Total Receipts	\$7,669,378	Total Expenditures	\$6,864,204

ASSESSED VALUATION

2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Total Assessed Valuation	Total Assessed Valuation	Total Assessed Valuation	Total Assessed Valuation	Total Assessed Valuation
\$396,930,241	\$392,379,891	394,853,916	430,916,504	437,176.322

Historical Total Assessed Property Valuation (Percent Change)

Year	Valuation	Increase/Decrease
2002-03	\$118,068,718	-----
2003-04	\$128,371,706	+8.73%
2004-05	\$130,302,484	+9.53%
2005-06	\$139,256,642	+6.87%
2006-07	\$152,045,383	+9.18%
2007-08	\$151,991,579	-0.04%
2008-09	\$198,235,250	+30.43%
2009-10	\$211,307,874	+6.59%
2010-11	\$217,994,332	+3.16%
2011-12	\$222,992,075	+2.29%
2012-13	\$260,540,833	+16.84%
2013-14	\$301,875,293	+15.86%
2014-15	\$361,676,261	+19.81%
2015-16	\$411,143,777	+13.68%
2016-17	\$419,557,157	+2.05%
2017-18	\$411,647,037	-1.89%
2018-19	\$396,930,241	-3.58%
2019-20	\$392,379,891	-1.15%
2020-21	\$394,853,916	+0.63%
2021-22	\$430,916,504	+9.13%
2022-23	\$437,176,322	+1.45%

LEVIES (Dollars and cents per \$100)

2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023	
General Fund	Bond Fund	General Fund	Bond Fund	General Fund	Bond Fund	General Fund	Bond Fund	General Fund	Bond Fund
1.0500	0.1374	1.0500	0.1415	1.0499	0.1304	1.0209	0.0121	0.1190	1.0376

CDC POVERTY AND LEP DATA

2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023	
Estimated Poverty Allowance	Estimated LEP Allowance	Estimated Poverty Allowance	Estimated LEP Allowance	Estimated Poverty Allowance	Estimated LEP Allowance	Estimated Poverty Allowance	Estimated LEP Allowance	Estimated Poverty Allowance	Estimated LEP Allowance
\$78,234.85	\$0.00	\$87,085.90	\$0.00	\$89,675.00	\$0.00	\$90,171.40	\$0.00	\$91,714.15	\$0.00

**CALENDAR DETAILS REPORTED TO THE STATE
USED IN CALCUALTIONS OF ADA/ADM (11/15/2022)**

PONCA HIGH SCHOOL

Calendar Name: 1
Begin Date: 07/01/2022
Total Days in Session: 182
Number of Enrollment Records Using this Calendar: 176

PONCA HIGH SCHOOL

Calendar Name: 1 - F
Begin Date: 07/01/2022
Total Days in Session: 170
Number of Enrollment Records Using this Calendar: 28

PONCA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Calendar Name: 2
Begin Date: 07/01/2022
Total Days in Session: 182
Number of Enrollment Records Using this Calendar: 126

JACSKON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Calendar Name: 3-A
Begin Date: 07/01/2022
Total Days in Session: 87
Number of Enrollment Records Using this Calendar: 12

JACSKON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Calendar Name: 3-B
Begin Date: 07/01/2022
Total Days in Session: 90
Number of Enrollment Records Using this Calendar: 12

2021-2022 School Year

Written by Ponca Public Schools Superintendent, Brendan Calahan

This year, Ponca Public Schools finally got back to some sense of “normalcy,” as students were able to attend school with no COVID masking or distancing restrictions, and most activities welcomed back full fan attendance!

The district welcomed Brendan Calahan as Superintendent, Kylee Kephart as Kindergarten teacher, and Danielle Sparks as an Art teacher. Our student enrollment was 451 students, including 126 PK-2nd Grade students who attended Jackson Elementary, and 325 3rd-12th grade students who attended the Ponca Campus.

US News and World Report named Ponca High School the 2021 #1 high school in the tri-state, Sioux City Metro area. The same rankings placed Ponca High School #1 among all rural high schools in Nebraska, and #7 among all high schools in Nebraska regardless of size. The metrics these rankings are based off include College Readiness, State Assessment Proficiency, State Assessment Performance, Underserved Student Performance, College Curriculum Breadth, and Graduation Rate.

Ponca students continued to excel both in and out of the classroom. In the Fall season, our Volleyball team finished as Conference Runners Up, and Brody Taylor qualified for the State Cross Country Meet. Jarret Buckles was named Homecoming King, and Addie McGill was named Queen. Our One-Act team finished as Conference Runners Up as well, with Lucas Hoelsing named Outstanding Male Actor. Finally, our Pep Band finished as Runners Up in the annual Battle of the Bands competition in Pender. Academically, 11 competitors were named Academic All-State for the Fall season. This includes Austen Janssen and Brody Taylor in Cross Country, Brady Carnell and Aidan Cook in Football, Lucas Hoelsing and Abbie Hrouda in Play Production, Julien Buckles and Peighton James in Softball, Alyssa Swick in Unified Bowling, and Abbie Hrouda and Addie McGill in Volleyball.

In the Winter, our Girls Basketball team made a 4th consecutive State Tournament appearance, after finishing as both Conference and District Champions! Dalton Anderson and Aidan Cook both qualified for the State wrestling tournament, the former for the 4th consecutive time, as he will finish as one of the most decorated wrestlers to ever compete for Ponca. Our Speech team saw one of the most successful seasons in Ponca History, and qualified a whopping 12 competitors for the State Speech Meet, including Brennan Beach, Abby Fernau, McKenna Hammer, Brooklynn Lowe, Ashten Finseth, Lucas Hoelsing, Ally Schamp, Cade Statema, Lexi Swick, Kennedy Harding, Grace Rooney, and Zoe Kastning! Not to be outdone, our Band had 24 All-Staters, including Grace Hansen, Karen Alvarado-Mendez, Grace Rooney, Matthew Lentz, Abby Fernau, Miguel Balvantin, Bradley Lentz, Ellesyn Hrouda, Ethan Goodier, Michael Hamilton, Austen Janssen, Connor Schamp, Chase Kastning, Brennan Beach, Abbie Hrouda, Brooklynn Lowe, Claire Burrell, Lucas Hoelsing, Brady Carnell, Matthew Hayes, and Junior Highers Addyson Chytka, Aveyana Simon-Cook, Mia Krusemark, and Michael Ney. Matthew Hayes was named Snowball King, and Alyssa Swick was named Queen. 7th Grader Kaylee Kloster was one of only 62 contestants who qualified for the Regional Spelling Bee in Omaha, and 5th and 6th graders Ashlin Bacon, Hayden Hatcher, Brooks Kephart, Liam Korth, Hannah Reuter, Karlee Rohan, Peyton Sjobom, Delaney Stark, JT Stroud, and Sofia Voss all qualified for the Sing Around Nebraska Choir event in Fremont! Cole Jackson, Evan Keller, Abbie Hrouda, and Addie McGill brought home Academic All-State Honors in Basketball, Grace Rooney and Lexi Swick in Speech, and Aidan Cook in Wrestling.

The Spring brought even more success. Our artists cleaned house at the Conference Art Show. Of 25 pieces entered, 23 won awards, including Emma Berg, Bella Brummond, Peighton James, and Karen Alvarado-Mendez all bringing home 1st place in their sub-category, Alyssa Swick, Abbie Hrouda, Bella Brummond, and Lexi Swick winning Best of Category, and Lexi Swick bringing home Best of Show! Our golfers finished as Conference Champions, including Grant Sprakel as individual Champion, and Grant went ahead and qualified for the State Golf Meet as well! In track, the boys finished as Conference Champions, and 12 athletes qualified for the state track meet, including Abbie Hrouda, Matt Logue, Taylor Korth, Brody Taylor, Claire Burrell, Ellie McAfee, Dalton Lamprecht, Ellesyn Hrouda, Ethan Eifert, Julien Buckles, Gracen Evans, and Brady Carnell. To cap the Spring season, Cole Jackson was Ponca's 1st ever National FBLA Qualifier! Spring saw us bring home more Academic All-State honors, as well, including Miguel Balvantin in Golf, Lucas Hoelsing and Austen Janssen in Music, and Caiden Bellows, Brady Carnell, Abbie Hrouda, and Addie McGill in Track.

In April, 11 students were inducted into the National Honor Society, including Julien Buckles, Michael Hamilton, Cole Jackson, Evan Keller, Mattie Milligan, Alyssa Schamp, Miguel Balvantin, Andrew Brinkmann, Brady Carnell, Lily Korth, and Grant Sprakel.

Finally, Ponca High School graduated 38 seniors on May 7th that combined, won over \$150,000 in scholarship money. Alyssa Swick earned Valedictorian, and Aidan Cook earned Salutatorian. We also graduated 42 Kindergartners and 28 Pre-Schoolers. The future is bright for Ponca Schools!

The end of the school year saw the departure of High School Principal Derek Lahm, 4th grade teacher Mishelle Fields, and long-time Ponca Elementary Secretary Patti Boyle. The Ponca Community Educational Foundation sponsored a year-end luncheon, where they awarded \$13,572 in Special Use Awards to staff throughout the district. A fantastic end to a fantastic school year!