

Welcome to Grenora Community & School

Grenora, North Dakota, is a rural agricultural and oil industry community located in Williams County. The town was founded in 1916 as part of the Great Northern Railway branch in the far Northwestern corner of the state. The name comes from a combination of the letters in the railway's name: GREAt NORthern RAILway. The tracks were in place until 2002, when Great Northern successor, Burlington Northern Santa Fe, filed for abandonment. The community supports a United States Postal Service Office, a café, the Circle M Grocery Store, the Centennial Bar and both a Catholic and Lutheran church. As with most small rural towns, the school is the hub of the community, providing entertainment and recreation for the local citizens.

The Grenora Public School District is the largest employer in the community, employing twenty-two full-time teachers and two full-time administrators, along with twelve full-time ancillary staff members and one part-time ancillary staff member. The school offers educational opportunities for students in grades kindergarten through grade twelve. Highly qualified instructors teach all four core subject areas in grades seven through twelve. The district is fortunate to be able to offer elective courses in Business, Industrial Arts, grades K through 12 Choir, grades 5 through 12 Band, and Family Consumer Science; this is uncommon in districts of our size. Additional course offerings are available through North Dakota Center of Distance Learning, Acellus, and Williston State College. Each elementary classroom has a full-time teacher and a half-time aid to provide instruction. Our average elementary enrollment in grades kindergarten through six is fourteen students per grade level. The small teacher to student ratio allows for one-on-one instruction and provides teachers the opportunity to supply each student with additional support.

In 2012, the communities of Grenora, North Dakota, and Westby, Montana, established an athletic cooperative between the two school systems creating the MonDak Thunder. Through the cooperative, athletic opportunities are offered to students in grades 5 through 12. The majority of sporting events are held in Montana as the Thunder compete in volleyball, football, girls and boys basketball, track and field and golf under the guidelines of the Montana High School Association. The cooperative has been very successful with two trips to the state championship game by the football and boys basketball teams. The girls' volleyball and basketball teams have qualified for the state tournament in the past five years. The cooperative has been a great experience for both communities as without each other athletic opportunities would not exist in either community. Wrestling is also offered through the North Dakota Athletic Association for students in grades 7 through 12. Also, the community supports a youth wrestling program for grades kindergarten through 6.

An increase in oil activity caused a spike in the population which created a need for additional space in the school. Thus, a general election bond was passed for \$9.95 million of which \$2.95 million was bonded at 3.65%. The remaining seven million has been funded through a loan with the Bank of North Dakota at an interest rate of 2%. The new addition will host approximately one hundred students in grades 1 through 6. Included in the project are seven new classrooms, a teacher's lounge, a weight room, two locker rooms, two community bathrooms, a gymnasium, a ticket booth, a concession stand, mechanical room, and storage. The project came at a much needed time; the recent oil activity in Western North Dakota has caused our enrollment to quadruple in size over the past seven years. The Grenora Public School enrollment in 2009 was forty-four students in grades kindergarten through twelve as compared to one-hundred seventy-five in 2015. The addition also allows our students to meet the

demands of society by supplying them with state of the art technology. This included the addition of extensive new wiring and wireless technology throughout the school to support ever-increasing uses of the Internet and computer networks. We now have adequate space and facility for video conferencing of classes with other schools, something which was lacking before this new addition. In 2012 the old gymnasium was closed due to mold and the repairs needed would not have been feasible. With the addition of a second gymnasium, we now have the ability to conduct multiple practices reducing the amount of time student/athletes are away from home. The additional gym will allow the school district a greater opportunity to host events in the community. Students will benefit from extended physical education and recess opportunities. Having a dedicated weight room will allow the music department to utilize the stage and extend the life span of the stage by using the area in ways meant to fit its design. The community will also see benefits with access to the gymnasium, weight room and locker rooms in the evenings. Each community member may check out an access card which will allow them the ability to utilize the facility.

The new additions are incredible. However, a well-equipped building is not what educates students. It takes caring staff members that show compassion toward their students and their abilities. It has been said that "students don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." Our students are fortunate, not only do they have a caring staff, but also school board and community members that place emphasis on receiving a quality education. Looking ahead, the future of the Grenora Public School District is very promising. It is evident that the local school board supports education by the very aggressive steps they took to ensure the construction project became a reality. Community members insist that the building project saved Grenora; it happens so often that a community loses their school system and the community disappears. It is great to see the community support the Grenora Public School District by passing the bond issue and showing their support for education. With strong community support, the school system will continue to supply a quality education to the students. Parents can rest assured that GPSD will continue to be a great place to work, teach and learn.